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A C H R I S T I A N
D I R E C T O R Y,

Guiding M E N to their

ETERNAL SALVATION.

Divided into Three B O O K S;

The first whereof, appertaining to R E S O L U T I O N,
is contain'd in this V O L U M E, divided into
T W O P A R T S, and set forth now again
with many Corrections and Additions.

By R O B E R T P A R S O N S.

Filii hominum, ut quid diligitis vanitatem.

You children of men, why love you vanity.

PSALM IV. ver. 3.

Porro unum est necessarium.

But one thing is necessary.

LUKE X. ver. 42.

L O N D O N,

Printed by J O H N H O Y L E S: And Sold by T H O M A S
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MDCCXXXIX.

John Thomas Bond
1752

DIRECTORY

Containing

ETERNAL SALVATION

Printed into three BOOKS

The first which is applicable to all who are
is contained in this Volume, divided into
TWO PARTS, and is forth now being
with many comments and additions

By ROBERT PARSONS

The Author of the
Young Men's Guide, &c.

LONDON

Printed by J. B. B. B.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.



H R I S T I A N reader, the book

I offer to your perusal has already appear'd in so many editions, and so often pass'd thro' the world with that applause, with which solid piety will al-

ways meet, that it would be needless to detain you in shewing the value of a work, the lecture of which will force the readers to become its panegyrist, not only by the praise they will allow it in their discourse, but much more solidly by the change of their manners, and resolutions of a virtuous life. For it is almost impossible any one should read it with a serious attention, without being penetrated with such sentiments of his duty, as will make him resolve on the practice of whatsoever is necessary to fulfil it, and attain that great end to which we are all born, which

is to love and serve God in this world, and enjoy him in the next.

This was the intention of the author in first publishing the book: and God almighty has bless'd his pious designs with such an extraordinary success, that, I dare say, few or none have perused it with attention, but have been seriously moved to a reform of their manners by returning from vice, or confirm'd in a regular way of living by the practice of virtue.

This is also my intention in offering to you this new edition. God grant it meet with like success; and that the spirit of the author, still exciting in the reader those sentiments of Christianity which he breathes in every line, I may have some share in the reward of his good works, having by this edition made my self in some sort partaker of his labour.

The reason which first engaged the pious and learned author to undertake this work, was the love of God and his neighbour. The continual crimes of that dissolute age, by which a perverse generation not only offended, but insulted and even blasphem'd their Creator, struck deep into a heart inflam'd with the love of God: and the deplorable blindness of numberless Christians, who having in those days abandon'd at once the principles of morality and religion, ran on thoughtless to their eternal ruin, could not but draw tears of compassion, from one who had deeply
rooted

rooted in him, that favourite precept of his divine Master, that commandment which he calls his own; the observance of which he gives as a characteristic of his Disciples, that commandment, I say, by which every Christian is taught to love his neighbour as himself. *John 15.*

He tells us, in the eighth chapter of the second part of **this** book, the causes of the dissolute licentiousness of those days were chiefly two. The **first**, division, schism and heresy in matters of faith, which by raising many doubts, and by contentious quarrels, wearing out man's wit, brings him at length to care for no religion, but rather to condemn all. The second, inordinate love of the world, and those things which are of the world, which brings men even to hate God and rank themselves with those whom the Apostle calls *Enemies of the Cross of Christ*. *Philip. 3.*

Would to God the same causes did not continue to produce in these our days the like effects! but I fear I may apply to our age without danger of being impeach'd of scandal, that saying of the *Roman* poet *Ætas parentum pejor avis*, &c. Religion is almost disputed out of doors, bare-faced *Deism* does not only triumph in every booksellers stall; but much more diffusive and loud in those publick meetings where numbers who have been baptised in the Church of Christ, forswear each day the sacred bonds by which, at their regeneration, they were made part of his

A 3

flock,

flock, and blaspheme that very religion, of which they were so solemnly sworn members.

It is no wonder all christian virtues should be discarded, where all religion is. Nature will always prevail, where virtue is not grounded on solid principle; and no laws are capable of restraining the will, where no conviction is sufficient to fix the understanding. Hence this universal misfortune of our age, in which we see that an unbounded licence of framing, even antichristian systems in regard to the law of God, has usher'd in an unwarrantable liberty of transgressing the most essential precepts of the law-giver.

The assertion is fact: and I am sorry barefaced wickedness makes it so clear; I need not instance in particulars to convince the reader. If he has any sentiments of religion left, his ears must be continually shock'd with the grossest blasphemy against our Redeemer: and if he has not quite worn out his morals, he must glow with a perpetual blush, at the sight of those crimes which insult his God and damn his neighbour.

In these deplorable circumstances, I know not what better preservative I can offer against the growing distemper than this treatise, the author thought the properest remedy for the like evil in his days,

He

He has divided it into two parts, corresponding to the two causes of the dissolute licentiousness he condemns.

The first cause being a carelessness, and almost utter contempt of religion; in the first part of this book, having solidly establish'd against the *Atheist*, the existence of a supreme Being, or God; and thence by an undeniable consequence infer'd the obligation incumbent on man to love and serve him: he proves no less solidly against the *Free-thinker* and *Deist*, that the only religion in which we can discharge this our duty, is and must be the evangelical dispensation, which is the law of Christ.

But whereas the profession of christian faith will avail little towards salvation, unless the integrity of our life corresponds with the sincerity of our belief, that is, unless we practice the religion we profess; he lays down rules by which even the most simple may discern whether he is a true Christian, both as to the profession of his faith, and the practice of his life.

He avoids purposely such points of controversy as were occasion'd by divisions and novelties in matters of faith, to insist chiefly on the duties of a christian life, being convinced that if he could banish from our hearts the love of vice, he should soon remove the obstinacy of error from our understanding.

To this end, having in the sixth chapter made it incontestable, that the practical duty of a Christian consists in avoiding sin and embracing virtue, according to that of the *Psalmist*, Turn
Psalm 33. away from evil and do good: he employs the remaining chapters, in convincing us of the necessity we lie under of conforming our lives to this duty: which he does most persuasively, by laying before our eyes the grievousness of sin, and that terrible day of account in which God will judge all our actions: drawing from thence such motives as will frighten us into our duty, if we cannot be allured to it by the greatness of the rewards, which will be the everlasting recompense of those who adore, love and serve God in spirit and verity.

Having thus, in the first part of this book, establish'd the certainty of christian religion, and the indispensable obligation every one lies under of conforming to it: in the second part, which corresponds to the other cause of the wickedness he complains of in those days; he removes all the difficulties, which may hinder such as are convinced of their obligation, from a steady resolution of coming to the practice: and therein not only shews the deceitfulness and vanity of the riches, honours and pleasures of this world, to draw our hearts from a criminal attach to it; but moreover, discovers the snares by which the infernal enemy endeavours to make us defer at
least

least the amendment of our life, when he finds he can no longer disguise to us the importance of that great duty. In which performance he so reconciles the severity of God's judgments with the greatness of his mercies, that whilst he deters us from presuming on the mercy's of God, by a shew of his justice, he arms us against despair by minding us of his goodness.

Both ought to be puissant motives to our duty. Whilst the judgments of God make us tremble with fear, his bounties will inflame us with love; these will raise in us gratitude, those fill us with terror, that what we owe to our Creator may be the effect of a wholesom fear, if it is not the return of a grateful love.

Take therefore, christian reader, and peruse this book; not with the curiosity with which you devour a novel, but with such attention as the main business of your eternal welfare requires. Consider seriously and reflect often on the importance of this grand affair. It is the sole affair for which you were placed in this world; it is the end for which you were created. If you deviate from this end, an unavailing repentance will be your eternal doom.

It is now in your power to secure to your self everlasting happiness, by turning away from evil and doing good. The perusal of this treatise will supply you with motives to both, by convincing you of your obligations and making them

The P R E F A C E.

them easy to you. May the holy grace of God guide your thoughts and move your heart, that being directed in the ways of our Lord by the knowledge of these great truths, you may walk constantly in his paths by the practice of virtue.



THE



T H E C O N T E N T S.

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A

CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY.

P A R T I.

C H A P. I.

Of the many dangers worldlings run into for want of consideration, and how necessary it is for every man to enter into serious thoughts of his own state whilst he has time.



THE Prophets and Saints of almighty God, who from time to time have been sent by his merciful providence, to advertise and warn sinners of their perilous state and condition, have not only foretold them their wickedness, and dangers imminent for the same; but also have revealed the causes thereof, whereby they might the better provide a remedy against the inconveniencies which from thence ensue. Such is the charitable proceeding of our most merciful Lord with the children of men.

The charitable proceeding of God by his Prophets.

Among other causes, none is more general, or more often alleged, than the want of consideration; by which common snare and deceit of our adversary, most men

The danger of Inconsiderateness.

B

fall

Isaiah 5.

The sensual life of the Jewish gentry.

fall into sin, and remain in the same, to their final destruction and eternal perdition. So *Isaiah* the Prophet, speaking of the careless nobility and gentry of *Jury*, that gave themselves to banqueting and mirth, without consideration of their duties towards God, repeats often the threat of *wo* against them; and then puts down the cause in these words: *Harp, and viol, and timbrel, and shalm, and wine in your feasts, and the work of our Lord you regard not, nor consider the work of his hands. ---- Therefore hath hell dilated his soul, and opened his mouth, without any limit, and the strong ones, and their people, and their high and glorious ones, shall descend into it.*

Here are two causes, as you see, and two effects linked together, of these *Jews* damnation, the one depending on the other. For as good cheer and sensuality brought these men to live without considering God's works, and proceedings towards sinners; so inconsiderateness brought them to the mouth of hell. I say, that inconsiderateness of God's works towards sinners, brought them to this peril, for it follows in the very same place: *And the Lord of Hosts shall be exalted in judgment; and the holy God shall be sanctified in justice:* as if he had said, tho' you will not consider now God's judgments and justice amidst the heat and pleasure of your feasting; yet shall he, by exercising the same upon you hereafter, be known, exalted, and sanctified throughout the world.

Isaiah 47.

The daughter of Babylon forgets her end.

God himself addresses the like discourse by the same Prophet, to the daughter of *Babylon*, and by her, to every sinful and sensual soul figured by that name. *Come down* says he, *sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon --- Thou hast said, I will be a lady for ever, thou hast not put these things on thy heart, neither hast thou remember'd thy end. And now hear these things, thou that art delicate and dwellest confidently --- These two things shall come suddenly to thee in one day --- Evil shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not know the rising thereof:*
and

and calamity shall fall violently upon thee which thou canst not expiate. Misery shall come upon thee suddenly, &c.

Holy *Jeremiah*, after he had weigh'd with himself what miseries for sin the Prophets *Isaiab*, *Amos*, *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Abdias*, *Micheas*, *Nahum*, *Sophonias*, and himself (all which Prophets lived within the compass of one hundred years) had foretold to be impendent not only over *Samaria*, and the ten tribes of *Israel*, which were now already carried into banishment to the furthest parts of the East; but also over the states and countries that most flourish'd at that time, as *Babylon*, *Ægypt*, *Damascus*, *Tyrus*, *Sidon*, *Moab*, and finally over *Jerusalem*, and *Judea* it self, which he foresaw would soon after be destroy'd; when he saw also by long experience that neither his words, nor the words and cries of the other Prophets, could move the hearts of wicked men; he broke forth into this most lamentable complaint: *With desolation is all the land made desolate: because there is none that considers in the heart.* *Reg. 4: 15. & 17.*

Jeremiah made this complaint out of compassion of his people, that ran miserably to perdition for want of consideration. And the same complaint, with much reason, may every good Christian make at this time, for the infinite souls of such as perish daily by inconsiderateness. Whereby, as by a general and irremediable enchantment, many thousand souls are lull'd asleep, and find themselves within the gates of hell, before they think of any such inconvenience; being led through the vail of this present life, as it were blind-fold; by careless negligence, like beasts to the slaughter-house; and never permitted to see their own danger, until it is too late to remedy the same.

God says by the mouth of *Isaiab*: *Therefore is my people led away captive, because they had not knowledge --- Therefore has hell dilated his soul, and open'd his mouth, without any limit, and their strong ones, and their people, and their high and glorious ones shall descend into it.* Will you see what a mystery and sealed

The mystery of In-
confidence-
rateness.
Job c. 4.

secret this is? hearken then how another describes the same, and with what circumstances. Furthermore says he, A certain hidden word was spoken unto me, and mine ear, as it were by stealth, received the veins of his whispering: it was in the horror of a vision by night, when dead sleep is wont to possess men. Fear came upon me, and trembling, and all my bones were extremely terrified. At length a spirit passed by in my presence, whereat the hairs of my flesh stood up in horror. There stood before me one, whose face I knew not. His image was before mine eyes, and I heard his voice, as the sound of a soft air.

Ibid.

Hitherto is described in what manner and order this secret was revealed: but now, what said this vision or spirit, think you, at the last? truly he made a short discourse, to prove by the fall of the Angels for their sin, that much more, *They that inhabit houses of clay (as all mortal men do, whose bodies are of flesh) which have an earthly foundation of earth (as most people of this world have, that put their confidence in things of this life) shall be consumed, as it were of the moth: From morning until evening (within less space perhaps than there is from morning to night) they shall be cut down, when they think least of it.*

Want of
considera-
tion cause
of eternal
destruction.
Psalms 91.

A point
that fools
will not
consider.

And to shew that herein stands a point of high secrecy (I mean, to consider and ponder well this discourse) he makes his conclusion in these words immediately following. *And because none (of those men before mention'd, who have such earthly foundations) understand they shall perish for ever:* And this is a secret which few men will believe: *The unwise man will not know, and the fool will not understand these things,* says the royal Prophet. But what things? it ensues in the same place: how wonderful the works of God, and how deep his cogitations are about sinners, who spring up as grass and flourish in this world, *That they may perish for ever.*

The Prophet *Daniel* had many visions and strange revelations of great and high mysteries: but one amongst all others, and this not the least, of the most dreadful judgment of God upon sinners in the end of the world. The vision was by the great river *Tigris*; where, as divers Angels were attending about the banks, one in the likeness of a man, of exceeding dreadful majesty stood upon the water. His apparel was only linen, through which his body shined like precious stones, his eyes like burning lamps, his face like flashing lightning, his arms and legs like brass inflamed, and his voice as the shout of a whole multitude of people that should speak together.

Dan. 10.
A most terrible vision of *Daniel* wherein he saw Christ.

This was Christ, by all interpretation, at whose terrible presence, when *Daniel* fell down as dead, he was erected again by an Angel, and made strong to abide the vision: and so having heard and seen the most wonderful things, which in his book he recounts; he was bold to ask a question or two for better understanding thereof: and his first question was: *How long the end of these marvels?* whereunto the man upon the water answer'd, by stretching out both his arms to heaven, and swearing by him that lived for ever and ever; that it should be *a time, and times, and the half of a time*. Which answer *Daniel* not understanding, began to question further; but he was cut off with this answer: *Go Daniel, because these words are shut up and sealed until the prefix'd time*. And yet, for his further instruction, it was added in the same place: *The impious shall do impiously, neither shall all the impious understand*, these mysteries, tho' we should never so much expound them.

Dan. 12.

Ibid.

Whereby, as by all the rest, that hitherto has been alleged, is made apparent, that inconsiderateness, negligence, careless ignorance, and want of understanding our own state, and God's judgments and proceedings with iniquity and sin, have been a bane, and a common perdition of careless men from time to time.

Wilful ignorance.

The cause
of so much
sin at this
day.

Job 15.

Luke 19.

Isaiab 47.

Luke 19.

Voluntary
inconfide-
rateness.

Job 21.

Job 24.

Psalms 35.

Prov. 28.

Ibid.

Deut. 6.

11.

Jes. 1.

Psalms 118.

Eccles. 6.

& 22.

And if we will turn our eyes to this our age, much more shall we see the same to be true. For what is the cause, think you, why at this day, we have so many of those people, whom one of *Job's* friends calls abominable, that drink up iniquity, as beasts do water; that commit all sin, all injustice, all turpitude, without remorse or scruple of conscience? what is the cause of this, I say, but want of consideration, want of understanding, want of knowledge? For, as Christ said to *Jerusalem* concerning her destruction, so may we say to these sinners: If thou also, O sinful soul, didst know, what hangs over thy head for this careless life of thine: if thou, daughter of *Babylon*, wouldst remember, and ponder in thy heart, what will be the end of these thy delights; thou wouldst not live so pleasantly, as thou dost. But now, says Christ, *these things are hidden from thine eyes.*

Not, but that thou mayst have known them, if thou wouldst; but because thou art one of them, who say to God: *We will not the knowledge of thy ways.* One of them, *that have been rebellious to the light* and illumination of God's grace. One of them, *that would not understand that he might do well.* And finally one of them, of whom the wise man says, *He that turns away his ears from hearing the law, his prayers shall be execrable and detestable* in the sight of his maker.

Truly, nothing in reason can be less tolerable in the presence of God's majesty, than, whereas he has published a law unto us, with so great charge to bear it in mind, to ponder it in heart, to study and meditate upon it both day and night, at home and abroad, morning and evening; to make it the object of our thought, our discourse, our talk, our exercise, our meditation, and our delight; that we should notwithstanding, so contemn the same, as to give to it no part of our thought, but rather to fly the knowledge thereof; as we see most men of the world do, not to trouble their consciences.

But

But the Holy Ghost has laid down the reason hereof long ago in these words: *For whereas wickedness is fearful, it giveth testimony of condemnation; for a troubled conscience does always presume evil things*, whensoever it thinks of the law of God, or of honesty. So *Felix* the governor of *Jury*, when *St. Paul* began to talk of justice, chastity, and God's judgments before him, he was wonderfully afraid, and said to *Paul*: *For this time go thy way: but in time convenient I will send for thee.* But he never did; and what was the cause? for that, as *Josephus* testifies, he was a wicked man; and *Drusilla* his lady, that was with him at *St. Paul's* speech, was not his true wife, but taken by allurement and violence from another; and therefore it offended them both, to hear preaching of chastity.

Sap. 17.
The first
cause why
foolish men
fly confide-
ration.

Acts 24.

Joseph.
lib. 20.
antiq. cap.
5.

This then is one principal cause, why men of this world will not enter into consideration of their own state, and of God's commandments, lest they should read and see their own faults, and bear against themselves witness of their own condemnation. Whereunto the Scripture annexes another cause, not far unlike to this, which is, that worldly men do so drown themselves in the cares and solitudes of this life, that they leave in their minds no place to think of their eternal concern; which is the business of their own souls. This *Jeremiah* the Prophet expresses most effectually, when having made his complaint, that notwithstanding his preaching and crying in the temple-gate, for a long time together, where all the people passed by him, and heard him; yet no man, says he, would enter into consideration, or say with himself, *What have I done?* whereof he adds presently the cause and reason; *They are all turn'd to their own course, as a horse going with violence to battle. The kite in the heaven has known her time, the turtle and the swallow and the stork, have observed the time of their coming: but my people have not known the judgment of the Lord.* By which comparisons the Holy Ghost expresses very lively the

The second
cause why
men fly
confide-
ration.

Jere. 7.

Jere. 8.

irrecoverable state of a settled worldly man, that follows greedily his own designs in his worldly concerns, without thinking of the judgments of God.

The third
cause of
inconfide-
rateness.

Sap. 15.

Eccles. 8.

These then are two of the chief causes of inconsiderateness, to wit, wilful aversion from the laws of God, for fear of seeing their own danger, and continual occupation in the vanities of this life. And yet the Scripture mentions a third sort of inconsiderate men, who neither deliberately, nor also by reason of too many occupations in worldly affairs, neglect consideration; but rather out of a certain levity and idle negligence, because they will not trouble their heads with any thing but sports and recreations, of whom it is written: *They esteemed our life to be a past-time.* And in another place of the same men: They live as securely, and confidently without care or thought, as if they had the good works of just men to stand for them. But as the Holy Ghost pronounces in the same place; This is vanity and folly in the highest degree.

Jer. 30.
In the end
evil men
shall under-
stand whe-
ther they
will or no.

For as in things of this life, he would be but a foolish merchant, who for quiet sake would never look into his account-books, to see whether he is behind hand, or prospers in his trade, and as that ship-master would greatly be to blame, who to avoid care, would sit down and make good cheer, and let the ship go whither she would: so, much more in the business of our soul, is it madness and folly, to fly consideration, to avoid trouble; seeing, in the end, this negligence must needs turn upon us much more trouble, and irremediable calamities. For as *Jeremiab* says to all such men: *In the later days you shall understand these things,* which now, for fear of giving your selves any trouble, you will not take the pains to think of. But when do you think this will be? he tells you plainly in the same place: When the fury of our Lord shall come forth as a whirlwind, and shall rush, and rest upon your heads as a tempest; then you shall know and understand these things. And in another chapter he says:

Behold

Behold the whirlwind of the Lord's indignation shall come forth, and a tempest breaking out : it shall come upon the head of the impious. The fury of the Lord shall not return till he do it, and till he accomplish the cogitation of his heart : in the later days you shall understand his counsel. Jere. 23.

It seems that the *Babylonians* were a people very faulty in this point of consideration, as all wealthy people are, because before the most terrible destruction of that great city, by the *Medes* and *Persians*, God cried unto her in these words : *Babylon my beloved is made a miracle unto me. Lay the table, look about in the watch tower the eaters and drinkers : arise ye princes take shield. For thus hath our Lord said unto me : go and set a watchman : and whatsoever he shall see let him tell.* And then there was a watchman set upon the walls, and a lion to denounce with open mouth, whatsoever danger he saw coming towards them. *And a lion cried out : I am upon the watch tower of our Lord, standing continually by day : and I am upon my watch standing whole nights, &c.* And in the same chapter God taught the people to cry in this sort to their sentinel or watchman : *Watchman, what of the night ? watchman, what of the night ?* That is, O sentinel what seest thou coming towards us, what danger espieest thou drawing on us in the darkness, &c. By all which circumstances, what else is insinuated, but that God would have us stand upon our watch, for that his judgments are to come upon the world by night, when men least think thereof ? they are to come as a thief at midnight, as also in another place we are admonish'd : and therefore happy is the man that shall be found watchful. The example of the Babylonians. *Isaiah* 47. *Isaiah* 21.

But now the sole entrance into this watch, whereon the security of our eternal life depends, can be nothing else but consideration. For that, where no consideration is, there can be no watch, nor fore-sight, nor knowledge of our state ; and consequently no hope of salvation,

We must stand upon our watch.

Bern. lib.
1. de con-
sider.

salvation, as holy St. *Bernard* holds; which thing caused that blessed man to write five whole books of consideration to *Eugenius*.

Consideration is the thing which brings us to know both God and our selves. And touching God, it lays before us his majesty, his mercy, his judgments, his commandments, his promises, his threatnings, his proceedings with other men before us; whereby we may gather, what we also, in time, must expect at his hands.

The many
 commodi-
 ties of con-
 sideration.

And for our selves, consideration is the key that opens the door to the closet of our heart, where all our books of account do lie: it is the looking-glass, or rather the very eye of our soul, whereby she takes the view of her self, and looks into all her whole estate; into her riches, her debts, her duties, her negligences; her good gifts, her defects, her safety, her danger; the way she walks in, the course she follows, the pace she holds, and finally, the place and end whereto she draws. And without this consideration, she runs on headlong into a thousand troubles and difficulties, stumbling at every step into some inconvenience or other; and continually in peril of some great and deadly mischief.

And it is truly wonderful, that in all other business of this life, men can see, and confess, that nothing can be either begun, prosecuted, or well ended without consideration; and yet in this great affair, of gaining heaven, or falling into hell, few think consideration greatly necessary to be used.

Effects of
 considera-
 tion.

I might here shew the infinite other effects and commodities of consideration, as that it is the watch or alarm-bell, and stirs up and awakes all the powers of our mind; the fuel that nourishes the fire of our devotion; the blast that kindles and enflames the same; the spur that forwards us to all virtuous, zealous, and heroical acts; and the very thing, that gives both light and life, and motion to the soul.

Our

Our faith is confirmed and increased by consideration of God's works and miracles; our hope by consideration of his promises, and of the true performance thereof to all them that ever trusted in him: our charity or love of God, by consideration of his benefits and innumerable deserts towards us: our humility, by consideration of his greatness, and of our own infirmities: our courage and fortitude, by contemplation of his assistance in all we undertake for his honour: our contempt of the world, by consideration of the eternal joys of heaven: and so all other virtues, both moral and divine, do take their heat and quickning, and vital spirit from consideration.

How all virtues are stirred up and quickened by consideration.

By the exercise of consideration and meditation, holy *David* says, That he felt a burning fire to flame within his breast; that is, the fire of zeal, the fire of fervour in religion, the fire of devotion, the fire of love towards God and his neighbour. And in another place he says, That by the same exercise, he swept and purged his own spirit, which is to be understood from the dust of this world, from the dregs of sin, from the contamination and coinquination of human creatures, because consideration indeed is the very fan that severs and drives away the chaff from the corn.

Psalms 38.

Psalms 76.

For which cause we shall never read of any holy man from the beginning of the world, neither before Christ or after, who used not much and familiarly this most blessed exercise of consideration and pondering. And for the first three Patriarchs, it will be sufficient to remember the custom of young *Isaac* recorded in *Genesis*. Which was to go forth towards night into the fields, *ad meditandum*, that is, *to meditate*, consider, and ponder upon the works, and judgments, and commandments of God. And this he did, yet being but a child and unmarried (far different from the custom of young gentlemen now-a-days, who frequent the fields to follow their vanities) and

The exercise of holy men touching consideration-

Gen. 24.

The first three Patriarchs.

and as *Isaac* could not have this custom, but from his father *Abraham*; so no doubt but he taught the same to his son *Jacob*, and *Jacob* again to his posterity.

Moses and
Joshua.

Deut. 6.
& 11.

Jos. 1.

K. *David*.
Psalms 38,
62, & 118.

Psalms 76.

And as for *Moses* and his successor *Joshua*, it may easily be imagined how they used this exercise, by the most earnest exhortations, which they made thereof to others in their speeches and writings. The good kings of *Judah* also, notwithstanding their many great temporal affairs, do testify of themselves how they used this exercise, as *David* almost every where says, That the commandments of God were his daily meditation, and not only by day, *all the day, and every day; in the morning, and seven times a day*: but also he insinuates his custom of meditation, by night: *I did meditate by night in my heart upon thy commandments, O Lord*; signifying hereby, both his watchfulness by night, when other men were asleep; and the hearty care that he had of this exercise, which we esteem so little.

Eccles. 6.

K. *Heze-*
kiah.

Isaiah 58.
Isaiah 26.

Solomon also king *David*'s son, as long as he lived in the grace and favour of God, observed this exercise of his father, and exhorts other men to it. *Have, says he, thy cogitation in the precepts of God, and in his commandments most of all be daily conversant, and he will give thee heart, and the desire of wisdom shall be given thee.* Which if himself had continued still, it is likely he had never fallen from God by women, as he did. The good king *Hezekiah* is reported to have meditated like a dove, that is, in silence and in solitariness with himself alone; which is the true way of profitable meditation. *Isaiah* testifies of his own watching by night in this exercise, and how he did the same saying: *My soul has desired thee in the night: yea, and with my spirit in my heart I will watch to thee in the morning.*

The con-
sideration
that *Job*
used, and
the fruits
thereof.

Holy *Job* makes mention, not only of his manner of considering, but what also he consider'd, and what effect he found in himself by the same. First he consider'd, as I said, the ways, footsteps and commandments of God, and then his dreadful power; *For,*
says

says he, *he is alone, and no man can turn away his cogitation: and whatsoever his soul would that has he done----* And therefore I am troubled at his face, and considering him I am made pensive with fear. In which words he insinuates two most excellent effects of consideration; first, the fear of God, of which it is written, *The fear of our Lord, that is his treasure;* and the second, that by this fear he was made solicitous, watching, and diligent in God's service, of which the Prophet *Micheas* says thus. *I will shew thee, O man, what is good, and what our Lord requires of thee: verily, to do judgment and to love mercy, and to walk solicitous with thy God.*

Two effects of consideration.
Isa. 32.

Mich. 6.

But O! thou holy and blessed man *Job*, did this exercise of consideration bring forth in thee so great fear and terror of God, and so careful watchfulness in the observance of his commandments? now I see well the cause, why thou writest of thy self, that thou didst doubt and fear all thy works and actions, were they never so circumspect. But what shall we say now-a-days, most happy Saint, who do not fear even our own dissolute, careless, and inordinate actions; who feel no terror of God at all, nor do use any watchfulness in observing his commandments? truly this proceeds from nothing else but inconsideration: it proceeds from want of knowledge both of God and of our selves. For doubtless, if we knew either of these two things aright (as indeed neither of them can be well understood without the other) it could not be, but that many of us would change our wrong courses.

A consideration upon the doings of *Job*.
Job 9.

O merciful Lord, what sinful man in the world would live as he does, if he knew either thee or himself as he should do? I mean, if he consider'd what thou art, and what thou hast been to others, that lived and continued in sin, as he does? not without great cause, that holy doctor of thy Church, cried so often and earnestly to thee, for obtaining these points at thy hands: *ut cognoscam te, ut cognoscam me,* That

August. in lib. confes.

I may know thee, and that I may know my self, says he: that is, that I may consider and feel the true knowledge hereof, for many men do know, but to little profit and advantage.

Know-
ledge and
belief in
gross.

We know and believe in gross the mysteries of our faith, that there is a God who rewards good and evil; that he is terrible in his counsels upon the sons of men; that there is a hell for sinners, a heaven for good livers, a most dreadful day of judgment to come, a strait account to be demanded, and the like: all this we know and believe in general, as merchandize wrapped up together in a bundle. But because we unfold not these things, nor meditate upon them in particular; because we let them not down into our hearts nor ruminate on them with leisure and attention; because we chew them not well in our mind by a deep consideration, nor digest them in our heart, by the heat of meditation; they remain with us a sword in the scabbard, and help us as little unto a good life, for which they were revealed, as a preservative in our pocket never applied, can help our health. We bear the general knowledge of these mysteries locked up in our breasts, as seal'd bags of treasure that we never counted nor open'd; and consequently we have neither feeling, sense, or motion imparted to us thereby: even as a man may carry fire about him in a flint stone without heat; and perfumes in a pommander without smell, except the one be beaten, and the other chafed.

A famili-
tude.

The im-
portance
of confi-
deration.

All depends then, good reader, on this one point, for the direction of our selves in this life, and for reaping benefit by the mysteries of our faith and religion; that we allot our selves time to meditate, ponder, and consider what these things do teach us. For as the sick man that has most excellent remedies and precious potions set before him, could expect no profit or ease thereby, if he only did look upon them, or smelt them, or took them into his mouth alone,

alone, or should cast them forth off his stomach again, before they were settled or had time to work their operation: even so is it in this case of ours. And therefore with great reason *St. Paul* said to *Timothy*, after he had taught him a long lesson: Meditate, consider, and ponder upon these things which I have shew'd you: as if in other words he had said, all that hitherto I have told you or written for your instruction, and all that ever you have heard or learn'd besides, will avail you nothing for your salvation, except you meditate and ponder upon the same, and do suck out the juice thereof, by frequent consideration. 1 Tim. 4.

Wherefore to conclude this chapter, my dear and well-beloved brother, seeing consideration is so precious, and profitable, so needful and necessary a thing, as has been declared; I thought it convenient in this first front and entrance of my book, to place the mention and diligent recommendation thereof, as of a thing most requisite for all that follows. For without consideration, neither what I have said already, nor any thing else, that will or can be said hereafter, can yield thee profit; as by most lamentable experience we see daily in the world, where many millions of men pass over their whole age, without reaping any profit of so many good books, so many preachings, so many virtuous examples, so many terrible chastisements of God upon sinners, which every where they see before their face. But yet, because they will not, or have not leisure, or dare not, or have not grace to enter into consideration thereof; they pass over all, as sick men do pills, diverting as much as they can, both their eyes and thoughts, from all such matters as are ungrateful unto them. The conclusion of the chapter
The misery of the world.

But as good *Jeremiah* says, The time will come when they will be forced to see and know and consider these things, when perhaps it will be too late to reap great comfort or consolation thereby. Wherefore, dear brother, Jerem. 30. & 23.

ther,

ther, that which perforce thou must do in time to come, and that perchance to thy greater damnation (I mean to enter into consideration of thine own state) do that now willingly to thy comfort and merit, to prepare the way to thy salvation. Prevent the day, and redeem the time, according to St. *Paul's* wise counsel: Run not headlong with the world to perdition: stay some time, as holy *Jeremiah* admonishes thee, and say to thy self: *What do I? whither do I go? what course hold I? what will be my end?* take some time from thy pleasures, and from the company of thy pleasant friends, to do this; although it be with some loss of pastime and recreation: for I do assure thee, it will recompence it self in the end, and make thee joyful when thy laughing friends will weep.

Ephes. 5.

Jerem. 7.

The effect
of all the
chapters
following.

John 17.

The effect of all the considerations that ensue, is, rightly to know God: for by knowing him we shall know ourselves, and all things else, which are necessary for us to know; and without knowing him, all knowledge in the world is vanity and meer folly. *Hæc est vita æterna*, says Christ to his father: *ut te cognoscant solum Deum verum: Et quem misisti Jesum Christum.* This is life everlasting, that men know thee, which art only true God; and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

The ways
to know
God in
this life.

Psalms 45.

God's nature and essence we cannot know in this life; but the only way to know God in this world, is to know his majesty, to know his mercy, to know his justice, to know his judgments; to know his hatred to sin, his favour to the good, his benefits, and promises to all: his grace, his threats, his ways, his commandments, his dealings towards other men before us, all which things the considerations following do set before our eyes, and consequently, they do teach us to know God aright. Read them therefore, dear brother, with attention; and remember the words that God uses to us all; *Vacate, & videte quoniam ego sum Deus.* Take leisure, and consider that I am God. It must not be done in haste; nor as the fashion is, for curiosity only,

to read three or four leaves in one place, and so in another: but it must be done with such serious attention, as appertains to so great a business, which in truth, is the weightiest affair, that possibly under heaven, can be taken in hand. It is the business whereof Christ is to be especially understood, when he said: *Unum est necessarium*, One only thing is necessary. Because all other things in this world are but trifles, in comparison to this alone, which of it self, is of more importance than all the rest together.

Luke 10.

C H A P. II.

That there is a God who rewards good and evil; against all atheists of old, and modern times: with the proofs alleged for the same, both by Jew and Gentile.

SECT. I. *Every part of the Creation shews there is a God.*

IT is a thing both common and ordinary in sciences and arts, when they are learn'd or deliver'd by others, to suppose divers points and principles, and to pass them over without proof, as either known before to the learner, or else so manifest, easy, and evident of themselves, that they need no other proof, than only declaring them.

A common custom in sciences, to suppose principles.

So when we take in hand to instruct a man in chivalry or feats of arms, we suppose that he knows before, were he never so rude, what a man, what a horse, what armour, what fighting means: as also, that war is lawful and expedient in divers cases; that princes of the world may wage the same; that soldiers are bound to live in order and discipline under their regiment;

An example in chivalry.

C

and

and that for this reason, Kings entertain generals, colonels, captains, and other like officers in their pay, and keep them in garrisons, camps and armies, to see due order observed.

In handy-
crafts.

In manual arts and occupations likewise it is evident, that divers things must be presupposed to be fore-known by the learner; as in husbandry or agriculture, in building, in painting, and other such exercises; when a man is to be taught or instructed, it would not be convenient for the teacher, to stand upon every point or matter, that appertains to the same, but he must leave and pass over many things, as apparent of themselves, or easily to be discern'd by every learner's natural sense, reason, or common experience.

In liberal
sciences.

Grounds to
be granted
in sciences.

In logick.

But yet in liberal sciences and professions of learning, this is more apparent, where not only such common and vulgar points are to be presumed, without proof or discourse; but also certain propositions are to be granted in the beginning, as grounds, whereupon to build all the rest that ensues. So the logician, for example, will have you grant before he enters in dispute with you, *That contradictory propositions cannot be together either false, or true*: and also, *That the same thing cannot be affirm'd, and denied of the same subject, in the same circumstances of existence, time, &c.*

In moral
philoso-
phy.

In natural
philoso-
phy.

In the ma-
thematicks

In meta-
physick.

The moral philosopher will have you grant at the beginning, *That there is both good and evil in mens actions: and that the one is to be followed, and the other avoided.* The natural philosopher will have you confess, that all physical bodies, which depend of nature, have motion in themselves, and are subject to alterations; and *whatsoever is moved, is moved by another.* The mathematician will have you grant, as an undeniable principle, *That every whole is bigger than any of its parts.* As also the metaphysician, or supernatural philosopher, *That nothing can be existent, and not be existent at the same time.* And so other such like principles and common grounds, in these and all other sciences,

sciences, are to be demanded, granted, and agreed upon at the beginning, for the better pursuit and establishment of that which is to follow, being things in themselves, as you see, either by nature, common sense, or experience, most clear and manifest.

And is not this true, think you, also in divinity, and Indivinity. in the affairs, that we have now in hand? yes certainly, if we believe St. Paul, who writes thus to the *Hebrews*: *Credere enim oportet accedentem ad Deum, quia est, & inquirentibus se remunerator sit.* Heb. 11. He that is in coming towards God, must believe that there is a God, and that he is a rewarder to such as seek him. Behold here Two Principles, wherein a man must be resolved, before he can seek or draw near unto God. The one, *That there is a God*; and the other, *That the same God is just to reward according to his deserts, every man that seeks him.*

Which two principles or general grounds are so evident indeed of their own natures, and so ingrafted, by God's own hand, into the mind and understanding of every particular man at his nativity, according to the saying of the Prophet: *The light of thy countenance is sealed upon us, O Lord*; that were not the times we live in, too too wicked, and the shameless induration of sinners intolerable, we should not need to stand upon the proof of these points, for confirmation of the matter we now treat, which is of resolution: but rather, supposing and assuring our selves, that no reasonable creature living could doubt of these principles, we should pursue only the consideration of other things, that might stir up our wills to the performance of our duties towards this God, that has created us, and will give us our reward at the end, to every one according to his works. Psalm 4.

But as iniquity has so advanced her self at this day, The cause of this chapter. in the hearts of many, as not only to condemn and offend their maker; but also to deny him, thus to patronize their evil life, and to extinguish the worm of

If there is
a God, he
is a just re-
warder.

their own afflicted and most miserable consciences; I am forced, before all other things, to discover this absurd and gross error of theirs, and to remove also this refuge of desperate iniquity, by shewing the invincible verity of these two Principles, the one depending of the other, in such sort, that the first being proved, the second must of necessity follow. For if once it be manifest, that there is a God, who has care and providence of all those, whom he has created and governs; then must it ensue by force of consequence, that he is also to reward the same men, according to their merits and the works they have done in this life.

* See *Lactantius* at large in his book of the workmanship of the world.

The works of the world declare the workman.

Sap. 13.

Rom. 1.

First then to prove this Principle, *there is a God*, I need use no other argument, or reason in the world, but only refer each man to his own * sense, in beholding the world, whereof every part and portion is a clear glass, representing God unto us, or rather a fair table, wherein God has drawn and imprinted himself, in so many just characters and legible letters, that the simplest may read, and understand the same.

In respect hereof, the wise man said so long ago, Vain and foolish were all those, who considering the works, that are seen in this world, could not thereby rise to understand the workman. And he gives this reason, *A magnitudine enim speciei & creaturæ, cognoscibiliter poterit creator horum videri.* For by the greatness of beauty in the creature, *may the Creator thereof be seen and known.* Which *St. Paul* confirms when he says, The invisible things of God may be seen, and known by the visible creatures of this world; which is to be understood in this sense, that as a prisoner in a dungeon may easily, by a little beam that shines in at a chink, conceive there is a Sun, from whence that beam descends: and as a traveller in the wilderness, that falls upon some channel or brook, may ascend by the same to the well or fountain: even so he, that beholds and considers the wonderful works of this world, may thereby conceive also the wonderful artificer or workman that made them.

If

If a man should pass by sea into some foreign, strange, and savage country, where nothing else, but birds and beasts did appear; yet if he should espy some exquisite building, or other work of art and reason in the place, he would presently assure himself, that some men dwelt, or had been in that country; for such things could not be done by beasts, or unreasonable creatures: even so in the view and consideration of this world.

If we cast our eyes upon the heavens, we remain astonish'd, at the marvels we behold: but who made them? we see the skies of exceeding huge bigness, distinguish'd with most admirable variety and beauty, adorn'd with stars and planets innumerable, and these qualify'd so with their divers, and different, and unequal motions, as if they neither moved nor went together; yet do they never stop or hinder one the other, nor change their course out of order or reason. *Quis enarrabit cœlorum rationem, & concentum cœli quis dormire faciet?* Who is able to declare the reason of the heavens, or who can make cease or sleep the uniform course of their motion, says God to *Job*? as who would say, that because no man or mortal creature can do this, therefore we may imagine of what power, and perfection their Maker is. Which king *David* had done when he pronounced *Cœli enarrant gloriam Dei, & opera manuum ejus, annunciat firmamentum.* The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament does preach the works of his hands unto us.

If we cast down our eyes from heaven to earth, we behold the same of an immense bigness, distinguish'd with hills and dales, woods and pasture, cover'd with all variety of grass, herbs, flowers, and leaves; moisten'd with rivers, as a body with veins; inhabited by creatures of innumerable kinds and qualities; enrich'd with inestimable and endless treasures: and yet itself standing, or hanging rather with all this weight and poise, in the midst of the air, as a little ball without prop or pillar.

At which surprising and most wonderful miracle of nature, God himself, as it were, glorying, said unto
Job 38. *Job. Where wast thou, when I laid the foundations of the earth? tell me, if thou hast understanding. Who set the measures thereof, if thou know? or who stretch'd out the line upon it? upon what are the foundations thereof grounded? or who let down the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars praised me together, and all the sons of God made jubilation?*

The sea
 shews God.

*Arist. lib.
 de mirabi-
 libus.*

If we look neither up nor down, but cast our countenance only aside; we espy the sea on each hand of us, that environs round about the land. A vast creature, that contains more wonders, than man's tongue can express. A bottomless gulf, that, without running over, receives all rivers, which perpetually flow. A restless fight and turmoil of waters, that never repose neither day nor night; a dreadful, raging, and furious element, that swells, and roars, and threatens the land, as tho' it would devour it all at once. And tho' in situation it is higher than the earth, as the Philosopher shews, and makes assault daily towards the same, with most terrible cries and waves mounted even to the sky: yet when it draws near to the land, and to its appointed borders; it stays upon the sudden, tho' nothing be there to stop it; and is forced to recoil back again, murmuring, as it were, because it is not permitted to pass any farther.

Of which restraint, God asks *Job* this question.
Job 38. *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it breaks forth, proceeding as it were out of a matrice? whereunto no man being able to give answer, God answers himself in these words: I compassed it with my bounds, and put bars and doors. And I said, hitherto thou shalt come, and shalt not proceed further: and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves.*

The things
 in man de-
 clare God.

This, in short, may be sufficient to prove the existence of a God, from these things we see without us. But if we should leave these, and enter to seek God within our own selves; whether we consider our bodies,

or

or our souls, or any one part thereof, we shall find so many strange things, or rather so many seas of miracles and wonders, that preach and shew the glory of their Maker, that we shall not only perceive and see God most evidently, but rather as a certain old heathen has written, *we shall feel and handle him in his works.* Which kind of speech also St. Paul doubts not to use, affirming, that God has given space to every man in this life to seek him, *Si forte attreſcent eum, aut inveniant,* If perhaps they may handle him, or find him out. Which manner of words do signify, that by consideration of God's creatures, and especially of the wonders in man himself, we may come to see, and perceive the Creator so clearly; that, in a sort, we may be said to feel and handle him. So jointly do all things concur to the manifestation of their Maker: so manifestly, and effectually do they teach, and demonstrate, and paint out God unto us: nothing being so little, that declares not his greatness; nothing so great, which acknowledges not his sovereignty; nothing so low that leads us not up to behold his majesty; nothing so high, that descends not to teach us this verity.

*Jamblicus
de Myst. c. 1.*

Acts 17.

It would be a labour without end, to go about in this place to allege, what might be said in the proof of this principle, *that there is a God*; seeing there was never yet learned man in the world, either *Gentile*, or other, that acknowledged and confirm'd not the same, being driven thereunto by the manifest evidence of the truth it self.

If you object against me *Diagoras, Protagoras, Theodorus Cyrenensis, Bion Boristhenes, Epicurus*, and some few others, that were open atheists, and denied God: I answer, that some of these were utterly unlearned, and rather sensual beasts than reasonable men; and consequently might deny any thing, according to the saying of holy David: *The fool said in his heart there is no God.* Others that had some tincture of learning, rather jested at the falshood of their own pagan idols, than denied the being of one true God.

Old atheists.

*Lactius
l. 2. c. 4.
de vit.
philos.*

Psalms 13.

52.

Rom. 1.
Phil. 3.

Laet. 1. 3.
institut.

But the most part of these men, indeed, and such others as in old times were accounted atheists, denied not God so much in words, as in life and facts: such as *St. Paul* called atheists in his days, that obey'd their bellies, and followed their pleasures in sin and sensuality, not vouchsafing to think of God in this life: such was *Epicure*, and in our days many others of his profession, but yet, as *Lactantius* well notes, when the same men came to be sober, and speak of judgment; as at their death or other times of distress and misery, they were as ready to confess God, as any other who-soever.

But for learned men, and people of discretion, sobriety, and judgment, there was never yet any, whether he was a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, that doubted of this verity; but had means and arguments to confirm the same, as more particularly will be declared in the remainder of this chapter.

S E C T. II.

How the heathens proved there was a God.

Philosophers.

AMONG the *Gentiles* or heathen people, those men were always most in credit, and in greatest esteem, that profess'd the love of wisdom; and for that respect were call'd Philosophers. Who being divided into divers sorts, and sects, had four principal sciences, whereof they made profession: each one of these having other lower sciences comprehended under it.

Four principal sciences.

The mathematicians prove not God.

The first of these four, is call'd natural philosophy; the second, moral; the third, supernatural, or metaphysick; the fourth, mathematicks: and for the first three, they have each one their proper means, and peculiar proofs, whereby to convince, that there is a God. The fourth, which is the mathematicks, because it has no regard at all to the efficient or final cause of things (under which two respects and considerations only

only God can be known, and manifested to men in this world) therefore this science has no proper means peculiar to it self, to prove this verity, as the other sciences have, but receives the same as borrow'd from the former.

The natural philosopher among the *Gentiles*, had infinite arguments to prove by the creatures, that there was a God; but he reduced all to three principal and general heads, which are term'd, *ex Motu, ex Fine, & ex Causa efficiente*. That is, arguments drawn from the motion, from the end, and from the cause efficient of creatures that we behold; which terms, the examples following will make clear and manifest.

The argument of *motion* stands upon this general ground in philosophy; that *whatsoever is moved, is moved by another*. Wherein also is observed, that in the motions of creatures, there is a subordination the one to the other. As for example, these inferior bodies upon earth, are moved and turn'd by the air, and other elements; and the elements are moved by the influence and motion of the Moon, Sun, and other heavenly bodies; these planets are again moved by an impulse from the highest orb or sphere of all, that is call'd *the first moveable*, above which we can go no further among creatures.

Now then the philosopher asks here, who moves this *first moveable*? for if you say that it moves it self, it is against our former principle, that *no thing is moved in nature, but by another*. And if you say, that some other thing moves it; then is the question again, who moves that other? and so from one to another, until you come to some thing, that moves, and is not moved by another; and that must be God, who is above all nature.

This was the common argument of *Plato*, and *Aristotle*, and of all the best philosophers. And they thought it a demonstration unavoidable, and it seem'd they were admonish'd of this argument by considering the motion of a clock, whose hammer, when it strikes, shews the next

The natural philosopher.

The first argument in natural philosophy.
Arist. l. 7. & 8. Phy.

Primum mobile.

Plat. l. 10. de legib. Arist. l. 5. Phys. c. 5.
An argument taken from the clock.

next wheel, whereby it is moved ; and that wheel shews another wheel ; and so from one to another, until you come to that which was the first cause of motion to all the wheels, that is, to the clock-maker himself.

*Arist. lib.
de mundo.
A simili-
tude.*

Aristotle, to king *Alexander*, uses this pretty similitude : that as in a choir of singers, when the foreman has given the first tune or note, there ensues presently a sweet harmony and consent of all other voices, both great and small, sharp and grave : so God in the creation of this world, having given once the first motion to the highest heaven, call'd *Primum Mobile*, there ensue upon the same, all other motions of heavens, planets, elements, and other bodies, in most admirable order, concord, and congruity, for conservation, and government of the whole. And thus is God proved the argument of motion.

The second
argument
of natural
philosophy.

The other two arguments, *of the end, and of the cause efficient of creatures*, are made evident in a certain manner by this, that has been spoken of motion. For seeing by experience, that every thing brought forth in nature, has a peculiar end appointed, whereto it is directed by the self-same nature, (as we see the bird is directed to build her nest by nature, the fox to make his den, and so the like in all other creatures) the Philosopher asks here : what thing is that, which directs nature herself ; seeing each thing must have somewhat to direct it to its end ? and no answer can be made, but that the director of nature must be something above nature ; and that is God himself. This argument of the *final end* is most excellently handled by *Philo Judeus*, in his most learned treatise, *Of the workmanship of the world*.

*Philo de
opificio
mundi.
The third
argument
of natural
philosophy.*

**Vide Plu-
tarch. de
Placitis
Philos.*

From the *cause efficient*, the Philosopher disputes thus. It is evident by all reason, in respect of the corruptions, alterations, and perpetual motions of all creatures, that this world had a beginning ; and * all excellent Philosophers that ever were, have agreed thereupon, except *Aristotle*, who for a time, inclined to maintain, that

that the world had no beginning, but was from all eternity; though at last in his old age, he confessed the contrary, in his book to king *Alexander*.

Arist. l. 8. Phys. & 1. de Gen. & Corrup. Arist. l. de mundo & vide Plotin l. de mundo.

This then being so, that this world had a beginning, it must needs follow also, that it had an *efficient cause*. Now then is the question, who is that *efficient cause*, that made the world? if you say that it made it self, it is absurd: for how could it have power to make it self before it self was, and before it had any being at all? if you say, that something within the world, that is, that some part of the world made the whole, this is more absurd: for it is, as if a man should say, that the finger, and this before it was a finger or part of the body, did make the whole body.

Wherefore we must confess by force of this argument, that a greater and more excellent thing, than is the whole world put together, or than any part thereof, made the world, and was the *cause efficient*, of the frame that we see; and this can be nothing else, but God, that is above the world. So that hereby we see, how many ways the natural philosopher is provided with arguments to prove there is a God, and that by reason only, without all light or assistance of faith.

But the metaphysician, or supernatural philosopher among the *Gentiles*, as he to whom it appertain'd more particularly, to handle these high and supernatural affairs, had many more arguments and demonstrations, to prove and convince the being of one God.

The metaphysician, and his arguments.

And first of all he said, that it could not stand with any possibility in his science, that *ens finitum*, a thing *finite*, or closed within bounds or limits, as this world and every creature therein is, could be, but from some Maker or Creator. For says he, the thing that in it self is not infinite, has its bounds and limits; and consequently there must be something, that assign'd these bounds and limits. And seeing in this world, there is no creature so great, which has not bounds and limits; we must of necessity imagine some infinite supreme

The first argument in metaphysick.

Creator

Creator or Maker, that limited these creatures even as we see, that the potter, at his pleasure, gives bounds and limits to the pot he frames.

A maxim
in meta-
physick.
Arist. lib.
2. metaph.
caput 2.

This argument the metaphysician confirms by a received principle in his science, *That every thing, which is by participation, must be reduced and referr'd to some other thing, that is not by participation, but of it self.* And he calls a thing by participation, which is not in the fullest or highest degree of perfection in its kind, but may have addition made unto it : as for example, water, or any thing else that is heated by the fire, is hot by participation, and not of it self, because it can always be hotter, and have addition of heat made unto it : but fire is hot of it self, and not by participation, because it hath heat in the highest degree, and in that kind can receive no addition ; wherefore the heat of all other things which are hot by participation of fire, are reduced, concerning their heat, to the heat of fire, as to their original.

How all
creatures
are by par-
ticipation
of God.

Now then, says the metaphysician, we see by experience, that all the creatures and parts of this world, are *things by participation only* ; because they are finite in nature, and have limitations in all their perfections, and may receive additions to the same ; and consequently they must of necessity be referr'd to some higher cause, that is infinite in perfection, and exists of it self alone, without participation from others ; and this is God, who being absolute, endless, and without all limitation of perfection in himself, communicates from his own incomprehensible infiniteness certain limited natures, and perfections to every creature, which perfections in creatures, are nothing else, but little particles, and participations of the bottomless sea of perfections in the Creator, whereunto they are to be referr'd and reduced, as the beams to the Sun, and the brook to the fountain.

The metaphysician uses a second argument, grounded upon certain rules of unity, whereof one principle

is,

is, *That every multitude or distinction of things, proceeds from some unity, as from its fountain.* This he shews by many examples of things in this world. For we see by experience, that the divers motions or moving of the lower spheres or celestial bodies, do proceed from the moving of one highest sphere, and are to be referr'd to the same, as to their fountain. Many rivers are reduced to one well or spring : innumerable beams to one Sun : all the boughs of a tree to one stock.

The second argument in metaphysick de *Multitude.* Plato in *parmen.*

Primum mobile.

In the body of man, which, for its beauty and variety, is call'd the *little world* : the veins which are without number, have all one beginning in the liver ; the arteries in the heart ; the sinews in the brain. And that which is more, the infinite actions of life, sense, and reason in man, as generations, corruptions, nourishments, digestions, and alterations, feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing, hearing, moving, speaking, thinking, remembring, discoursing, and ten hundred thousand particular actions, operations, and motions besides, which are exercis'd in man's body under these or other such names and appellations : all these, I say, being infinite in number, most admirable in order, and distinct in every one of their offices and operations, do receive, notwithstanding, their beginning from one most simple unity, and indivisible substance, call'd the soul, which produces, governs, and directs them all to so innumerable, different, and contrary functions.

Microscopm.

The infinite things that proceed from the soul.

By this concludes the metaphysician, that, as among the creatures, we find this most excellent order and connection of things, whereby one brings forth many : and every multitude is referr'd to its unity : so much more, in all reason, must the whole frame of creatures contain'd in this world, wherein there are so many millions of multitudes with their unities, be referr'd to one most simple and abstract unity, that gave beginning to them all ; and this is God.

A third argument used by the metaphysician, is derived from the subordination of creatures in this world ; which

The third argument in metaphysick.

Subordina-
tion.

which subordination is such, and so wonderful, that we see, that no creature is by nature design'd to serve it self alone, but also others, and altogether conspire in serving the whole creation.

We see the heavens move about continually without ceasing; and this, not to serve themselves, but inferior creatures, less excellent than themselves. We see that water moistens the ground; the air cools, opens, and cherishes the same; the Sun heats and quickens it; the Moon and Stars pour forth their influence; the winds refresh it; and all this, not for themselves, but for others. The Earth again, that receives their services, uses not the same for her self, or for her own commodity; but to bring forth grass wherewith to feed cattle; and they feed not for themselves, but to give nourishment unto man.

A simili-
tude.

Now then, says the metaphysician, if a man that stood afar off upon a mountain, should see in a field under him, a great, huge, and main army of soldiers, most excellently well appointed, each one in order agreeing with the other; divided into ranks, squadrons, companies, and officers, subordinate the one to the other by degrees; and yet all tending one way, all their faces bent upon one place, all moving, marching, and turning together, all endeavouring with alacrity towards the performance of one common service by mutual assistance, without dissention, discord, difference, or clamour: he that should see this, says the metaphysician, as he could not but imagine some general high captain to be among these soldiers, whom all obey'd, and from whose supreme command and order, this most excellent subordination, agreement, and union, proceeded; so much more, upon consideration of the former coherence, consent, and miraculous subordination of creatures among themselves in their operations, must we infer, that they have some general commander over them all, by whose supreme disposition, each creature has its charge and peculiar task appointed, which
he

he must perform, for the common and universal service of the whole.

The fourth reason or argument alleged by the super-natural philosopher, is from the marvellous providence, art, and wisdom, discover'd in the making of even the least creature within the world. For seeing there is nothing so little, nothing so base or contemptible, within the compass of this heaven, that covers us, but if you consider it, you find both art, order, proportion, beauty, and excellency in the same: this cannot proceed from chance, as foolish *Lucretius*, and some others would have it; for that chance is casualty without order, rule, or certainty; and therefore needs it must come from the wisdom, and providence of some omnipotent Creator.

The fourth argument in metaphysick Providence

If you take a flie, or a flea, or a leaf from a tree, or any other the least creature, that is extant in the world, and consider the same attentively, you will find more miracles, than parts therein: you will find such proportion of members, such variety of colours, such distinction of offices, such correspondence of instruments: and those so fit, so well framed, so coherent, so subordinate, that the more you contemplate, the more you will marvel. Neither is there any one thing in the world more effectual to draw a man to the love, and admiration of his Creator, than to exercise himself often in these contemplations; for if his heart be not of stone, this will move his affection.

Lucretius made divers books against the workmanship of the world.

We read of *Galen*, a prophane, and very irreligious physician, that, as himself confesses in a certain place, taking upon him to consider the parts of man's body, and finding much wisdom in the order, use, and disposition of the same, he sought first to give the praise and glory thereof to nature, or to some other cause, than to God. But in process of time, being oppress'd, as it were, with the exceeding great wisdom, proportion, and providence, which he discover'd in every least parcel and particle of man's body, wherein nothing was redundant, nothing defective, nothing possible to be added, alter'd,

Galen forced to confess God's providence. *Galen l. 5. de usu part.*

Lib. 3. de
usu part.

alter'd, or better devised: he broke forth into these words, *Compono hic profecto canticum in creatoris nostri laudem, quod ultrò res suas ornare voluit, melius quam in ulla arte possent.* Here truly do I make a song in the praise of our Creator, for that of his own accord, it has pleased him to adorn and beautify his things better, than by any part possible it could be imagined.

Hereby then does the metaphysician gather; and conclude most evidently, that there is a God, a Creator, a most wise and powerful artificer, that made all things; such a one as exceeds all bounds of nature, and of human ability. For if all the world should join together, they could not make the least creature, which we see in this world. He concludes also, that the foresight and providence of this Creator is infinite, for things to come in all eternity; and finally, that his wisdom and cogitations are inscrutable. And tho' sometimes he reveals unto us some part thereof, yet often again we err therein. For which cause, a wise heathen platonick concludes thus, after long search about these affairs: *I will praise God, says he, in search about these affairs, I will praise God, in those things I understand; and I will admire him in those which I understand not: for I see, that myself oftentimes do things, wherein my servants are blind, and conceive no reason: as also I have seen little children cast into the fire jewels of great price, and their fathers writings of great learning and wisdom; for that they were not of capacity to understand the value and worthiness of the thing.*

A wonderful
speech
of a hea-
then.
Plotin. lib.
de prov.

The fifth
argument
in meta-
physick.
Immorta-
lity of the
soul.
Plat. l. 10.
de Repub.

I will allege one argument more of the metaphysician, grounded upon the immortality of man's soul; which immortality is proved with one consent of all learned men, as *Plato* alleges; for that it is a spirit and immaterial substance, the nature of which depends not on the state of our mortal body: for so by experience we see daily, that in old men, and wither'd sickly bodies, the mind and soul is frequently more quick, clear, pregnant, and lively, than it was in youth, when the body was most lusty.

The

The same is also proved by the unquenchable desire, which our mind has of learning, knowledge, wisdom, and other such spiritual and immaterial things; wherein her thirst by nature is so great, that it cannot be satisfied in this life; neither can the objects of sense and bodily pleasures, or any other commodity, or delight of this material world, content or satiate the restless desire of this immaterial creature. Which is an evident argument to the Philosopher, that some other object and satisfaction is prepared for her in another world; and that of such excellency and supereminent perfection, that it will have in it all wisdom, all learning, all knowledge, all beauty, and all other causes of love, joy, and content, wherein our soul may rest for ever.

When the desire of our soul shall be satisfied.

This being so, says the Philosopher, it must ensue of necessity, that the soul and mind of man is immortal, that an immortal Creator sent the same into our bodies, and that to him again it must return, after her departure from this life here. This was the true meaning indeed (howsoever some later interpreters have misunderstood the same) of that ancient doctrine of old philosophers, which *Plutarch* alleges out of *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, affirming, that all particular souls of men came, sent from one general and common soul of the whole world, as sparks from the fire, and beams from the common Sun; and that after their separation from their bodies, they will return again to that general soul, call'd *anima mundi*, the soul of the world, for that it gives life and being to the world.

Themist. in lib. de anima. Plat. de placit. philosoph.

The meaning of old philosophers touching *anima mundi*.

This was the doctrine of old philosophers, which seems indeed to have been nothing else tho' deliver'd in other words, than that which *Solomon* himself affirms in plainer speech, *Et spiritus redibit ad Deum, qui dedit illum*: And our soul or spirit, shall return to God that gave it unto us. And this may suffice for a taste of that which the metaphysician or supernatural philosopher can say for proof, that there is a God.

Ecclesi. 12.

D

There

The moral
philoso-
pher.

There remains yet a third part of human wisdom or philosophy, call'd moral, whose reasons and arguments for proof of this verity, I have of purpose re-
ferr'd to the last place, because they are more plain and easy, than the former; and more sensible to the capacity of every simple and unlearned reader.

The first
argument
of moral
philosophy

Tertullian
handles
this point
excellently
in *Apo'log.*

For first of all, he observes that there is in the very natural inclination of man, be his manners otherwise never so evil, a certain propension and disposition to confess some God or Deity; as he proves by the example of all nations, tho' they were never so fierce or barbarous; yet always confessed they some God by nature, tho' no man did teach or instruct them therein. The same is confirm'd by the common use of all heathens, in lifting up their eyes and hands to heaven, in any sudden distress that comes upon them: which imports, that nature herself has ingrafted this feeling, that there is a God: yea, further he alleges, that by experience of all ages, it has been proved, that atheists themselves, that is, such men, as in their health and prosperity, that they might with more liberty go on in a sinful life, would dispute against the being of any God; when they came to die, or fall into great misery, they of all other men, would shew themselves most fearful of this God, as *Seneca* declares, and as *Suetonius* shews in the example of *Calligula*: which is a token, that their conscience forced them to believe a Godhead.

*Seneca l. 1.
de ira.
Sueton. in
Callig.*

The saying
of *Zeno*,
touching
the death
of atheists.

Nay, *Zeno* the philosopher was wont to say, that it seem'd to him a more substantial proof of this verity, to hear an atheist at his dying day, preach God from a pair of gallows, or other such place of misery, when he asks God and nature forgiveness; than to hear all the philosophers in the world dispute the point: for at this instant of death and misery, it is like that such men speak in earnest and sobriety of spirit, who before in their wantonness, impugn'd God, either out of vanity, ambition, sensuality, or dissimulation.

Now

Now then, when the moral philosopher has proved, by this natural inclination of man, that there is a God, who has imprinted in us such a feeling of himself, that no conscience can deny him, when it comes to speak sincerely : then steps he a degree further, and proves, that this God, which is acknowledged, can be but one; for if he is God, he must be infinite, and if he is infinite, he can have no companion: for two infinite things cannot stand together, without impeachment the one of the other's infinity.

The reason why there can be but one God.

He proves the same by the custom of most *Gentiles*, who as *Lactantius* well notes in his time, when they swore, or cursed, or pray'd, or wish'd any thing heartily, especially in affliction, that lightens the understanding, their fashion was to say, *God*, and not *the gods*. And for the more learned sort of them, howsoever they dissembled, and applied themselves outwardly to the error of the common people ; yet, in earnest, they never speak of more than of one God ; as *Plato* himself signifies to *Dionysius* king of *Sicily* in a certain letter, wherein he gave him a sign, when he speaks in earnest, and when in jest. *Hinc disces tu, scribam ego seriò, necne. Cum seriò, ordior epistolam ab uno Deo ; cum secùs à pluribus.* By this sign shall ye know, whether I write in earnest or not: for when I write in earnest, I begin my letter with one God ; and when I write not in earnest, I begin my letter in the name of many gods.

Lact. l. 2. divin. instit. cap. 2.

Deus & non Dii.

Plat ep. 13. ad Dionys.

Cyrillus lib. contra Julian. Plotinus. Ennea. l. 8. c. 1. 2. & c. 6. l. 4. c. 1. 2. 3. 4. Porphy. l. 2. de abst. & l. de occa. c. 21. Procl. in theol. Platon. & l. de anima & Dam. 1. c. 31. 42.

Julian the apostate in his three most scornful books, that he wrote against us Christians, whom contemptuously he call'd *Galileans*, endeavouring by all means to advance and set forth the honour of paganism, alleges this *Plato* for a chief pillar, and father thereof ; and dares prefer him before our *Moses* : and yet you see, what he testifies of himself. And that this was his perpetual opinion, three of his worthiest scholars, I mean, three of the most learned, that ever professed the platonick sect, *Plotinus*, *Porphyrius*, and *Proclus*, all heathens themselves, do testify and prove in divers

Socrates.
Apuleius,
Angellius,
Et Laertius
in vita
Socrates.

parts of their works, assuring, that both they and their master *Plato* never believed indeed but only one God. And as for *Socrates*, that was *Plato's* master, and pronounced by the oracle of *Apollo*, to be the wisest man of all *Greece*; the world knows, that he was put to death, for jesting at the multitude of Gods among the *Gentiles*.

Aristotle
 and the pe-
 ripateticks.

Aristotle, that follow'd after *Plato*, began the sect of peripateticks, and was a man so much given to the search of nature, that in many things he forgot the author of nature; or at least, he treated little, and very doubtfully thereof: yet in his old age, when he came to write the book of the world to *Alexander*, (which book *St. Justin* the martyr esteem'd greatly, and call'd it the epitome of *Aristotle's* true philosophy) he resolves the matter more clearly, saying thus of God: *He is the Father of gods, and men; he is the Maker and Conserver of all things, that are in the world.* And he adds further in the self-same place, that the multitude of many gods was invented to express the power of this one God, by the multitude of his ministers: so that he makes all gods to be servants, besides only one. Which sentence of their master *Theophrastus*, and *Aphrodisæus*, two principal peripateticks, do confirm at large.

Justin in
Apolog.

Arist. de
mundo.

Theo. in
metaph.
Alex.
Aphrod.
lib. de
provid.

Zeno and
the stoicks.
Plut. de
sect. de
tranquil.
de quæst.
Plat. Se-
necca de
vita beat.
de provid.
in Ep.
Epict. apud
Arianum.

Zeno the chief, and father of all the stoicks, was wont to say, as *Aristotle* reports, that *either one God, or no God*: which opinion is averr'd every where by *Plutarch*, and *Seneca*, two most excellent writers, and great admirers of the stoick severity. And before them, by *Epicætetus*, a man of singular account in that sect, whose words were esteem'd oracles. *Dicendum, ante omnia unum esse Deum, omnia regere, omnibus providere.* Before all things, says he, we must affirm, that there is one God; and that this God governs all, and has providence over all.

As for the academicks, who made the fourth division or sect of philosophers, it is sufficient, which I have mention'd before, that *Socrates* their founder was put to death for his opinion in this matter; tho' it seems that such as follow'd in that sect, whose profession was

to dispute, and doubt of every thing, * came, at length, by their much jangling and disputing, to believe and hold nothing. Whereof *Cicero* himself may be an example, who in his books, *De Natura Deorum*, follows so far the academical vein of doubtful disputing to and fro about the nature of gods; that he may seem (and so did he to divers Christians of the primitive Church) to be very irresolute, whether there were any God, or no. Tho' in the end he makes shew to conclude very plainly and peremptorily with the stoicks.

* So in this time of variety of sects.

Arnob. cont. Gentiles.

All the four sects then of philosophers, who in their time bore the credit of learning and wisdom, made profession of one God, when they came to speak as they thought. But if we ascend up higher, to the days before these sects began, that is, to *Pythagoras* and *Archytas Tarentinus*; and before them again, to *Mercurius Trismegistus*, that was the first parent of philosophy to the *Ægyptians*; we shall find them so resolute, and plain in this point, that no Christian can be more. Whereof he that desires to see innumerable examples, as well of these mens sayings, as of other learned heathens of all ages, let him read but *St. Cyril's* first book against *Julian* the apostate; or *Lanctantius's* first and second books against the *Gentiles*, and he will remain satisfied.

All old philosophers acknowledged one God.

Vide apud Plutarch. de placitis. Philos. Trismeg. in Pæmand. & in Asclep.

This then is the moral philosophers first argument: the inclination of all people to believe a Godhead; the instinct of nature to confess it; the force of man's conscience to fear it; the custom of all nations to adore it; and finally, the consent and full agreement of all learned and wise men, in applying this Godhead, not to many, but to one only, that made this world, and governs the same. *Non hominibus, non dæmonibus, non diis ipsis, quos non naturæ ratione, sed honoris causa, Deos nominamus.* We do not attribute the appellation of true God, says *Trismegistus*, either unto men, or unto devils, or unto the multitude of other gods themselves; because we call them gods, not in respect of their natures, but for honour's sake. That is, we call them gods, to honour

The recollection of the first argument in moral philosophers.

Trismeg. in Pæmand. c. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & c. in Asclep. c. 2, 6, & c.

Cicero's
opinion of
the multi-
tude of pa-
gan gods,
how they
were made.

them for their famous acts ; and not that we think them in nature true gods. Which *Cicero* confirms in these words : *The life of man, and common custom has now received, to lift up to heaven, by fame and good-will, such men, as for their benefits are accounted excellent. And hence it comes, that Hercules, Castor, Pollux, Æsculapius, and Liber, are now become gods, and heaven is almost fill'd with mankind.*

The second
argument
of moral
philoso-
phy.

The second argument of moral philosophy is, *de ultimo fine & summo bono*, that is, concerning *the last end of man, and of his highest or supreme felicity*, whereby the being of God is also confirm'd. And tho' I have said somewhat of man's end before ; yet what in this place I am to add, is more proper and peculiar to moral philosophy. For as other sciences may, and do consider the final ends of other creatures, which are divers, and yet all concur for the service of man ; so the science of moral philosophy does properly consider the final end of man himself, calling it, *summum bonum, his greatest and highest happiness*, whereunto he was created, and whereunto he tends in this life, and wherein he rests and reposes without further motion or appetite, when he has obtain'd it.

Every
thing in
this world
has a natu-
ral desire of
obtaining
its end.

For better understanding whereof, it is to be consider'd, that every thing in this world has some particular end, together with an appetite and desire, ingrafted by nature, of attaining that end ; which desire ceases, when the end is obtain'd. As, for example, a stone has a natural appetite to go downward to the centre or middle of the earth, and so it rests in no place, except by violence it be stop'd, until it come thither. On the contrary, fire reposes no where except it be restrain'd, until it mount up above the air, to its peculiar and natural place of abode, where, of it self, it rests. And so in other things that are without sense, there is a certain natural appetite and desire, carrying them to their end ; which end being once obtain'd, that desire and appetite, of it self reposes.

In

In beasts likewise we behold, that they have a desire to fill their bellies, and to satisfy their own senses, which being satisfied, they remain contented, and desire nothing else, until the same appetite of sense wants its object again. Whereby we perceive, that sensuality or contenting the senses, is the final end desired by beasts, and their very *summum bonum*, or *supreme felicity*. The felicity of beasts.

But in man, altho' for the support of the body, there is this appetite also to satisfy his senses, according to the lower portion of his mind, that is call'd *sensitive*; yet according to the other higher part of his mind, which we call *reason*, or the reasonable part, which is the only part indeed, peculiar to man, that distinguishes him from unreasonable beasts; he has an appetite of some more high and excellent object, than is the contenting of these senses; for by experience we see and feel, that oftentimes, when the senses are all satisfied, yet is the mind not quiet; which argues that sensuality or sensual delectation, is not our *summum bonum*, wherein our mind must rest and enjoy her felicity.

Hereupon have philosophers and wise men fallen to dispute, in all ages, what should be the final felicity and *summum bonum* of mankind? and *Cicero* says, that this point, is *cardo totius Philosophiæ*, the hinge whereon all philosophy hangs. For this being once found out, clear it is, that all other things and actions are to be referr'd to the obtaining of this end and happiness. And therefore, about this point, there has been marvellous contention, and fight among philosophers; the Stoicks refuting the Epicures, and the Peripateticks refuting again the Stoicks; and the Platonicks, who came nearest the truth, impugning and refuting both the one and the other: and this dissention went so far, the one part assigning one thing, and the other another, to be this felicity, or *summum bonum*; that *Marcus Varro* a most learned Roman, gather'd two hundred eighty eight different opinions, about this matter, as *St. Augustine* notes. Cic. l. de finib. bonorum & malorum.

The contention of philosophers about the felicity of man.

Aug. l. 19. de Civit. c. 1.

The sentence of *Plato* in *Phædon*. How nothing in this life can be our felicity.

And finally when all was said and examin'd, *Plato* found, that nothing, which could be named or imagined in this life, could be the felicity or *summum bonum* of man ; for it could not satisfy the desire of our mind : and therefore he pronounces this general sentence. *It is impossible, that men should find their felicity, or summum bonum in this life, seek what way they will ; but in the next life, without all doubt, it must be found.* The reason of which sentence and determination was, that *Plato* was able to refute any thing, that the other philosophers did, or could name to be our felicity and final end in this life, were it riches, honours, pleasures, moral virtues, or the like, which each sect did assign.

As, for example, he proved that riches could not be *summum bonum* or happiness, for that they are uncertain, inconstant, vain, variable, and things that bring with them more danger oftentimes, and trouble of mind, than poverty does. Honours he refell'd, because, besides their vanity, they depend of the mouth and minds of other men, who are changeable and inconstant. Pleasures of the body and voluptuousness, for that they are common to us with beasts, and always have annex'd their sting, and discontent, when they are past. Moral virtues, by reason they consist in a certain perpetual fight and war with our passions, which never give us rest or repose in this life. Finally, whicheversoever we turn our selves, and whatsoever we lay our hands upon in this life, to make it our felicity, or *summum bonum* : it fails us, says *Plato*, neither does it give any durable content to our mind ; wherefore this felicity is to be sought and obtain'd in the life to come.

How far moral philosophy reaches in determining man's felicity.

Thus far arrives moral philosophy by reason, to prove, that man's felicity or final end cannot be in any thing in this life or world. It proves also by the same reason, as in part it has been touch'd before, that this felicity of our mind in the life to come, must be a spiritual and immaterial object, since our mind and soul is a spirit : it must be immortal, as our soul

is immortal. But what, does human philosophy go on any further? or can *Plato* assign the particular point, wherein it stands? Hear his words, and confess, that not without reason he was call'd *divine*. In this it consists, says he, *ut conjungamur Deo, qui omnis beatitudinis fastigium, meta finis*. That we be join'd to God, who is the top, the goal, and the end of all blessedness. And can any Christian, think you, say more than this? yet hearken what a scholar of *Plato* says, for explication of his master's sentence. *Supremus hominis finis, supremum bonum, id est Deus*. The final end of man, whereunto he tends, is a supreme or sovereign good thing, and this is God himself. By which words, we see, that these heathens, by the end of man, could find out God; which was the second argument propounded in moral philosophy.

Plato in Phæd.

Plotin Enu. l. 4. c. 1.

A third argument uses the moral philosopher for proof of God, which shall be the last I will allege in this place, deduced from consideration of good and evil, vice, and virtue; and especially of the reward, which by nature, reason, and equity is due to the one, as also of the punishment belonging to the other. For, says he, as in all other things, creatures, and actions of this world, that pass from the Creator, we see proportion, order, justice, wisdom, and providence observed; so much more must we assure our selves, that the same is observed in the same Creator's actions and proceedings towards man, that is the chief and principal of all his other creatures.

The third argument in moral philosophy, touching reward and punishment.

Now then we see and behold, that all other creatures are directed to their ends by nature, and do receive comfort, and content, as long as they hold that course: and loss, disease, and grief, as soon as they break or swerve from the same. Only man has reason given him, whereby to know and judge of his end; as also free-will, and election, whereby he may, either direct his way to the same by virtue, or run astray by following of wickedness. Whereupon it ensues, that

in

in all equity and justice, there must remain reward for such as do well, and follow the right path assign'd them to their end and felicity, which is done by a good life : and punishment for the others, that abandon the same, for pleasure and sensuality.

But we see in this world, says the philosopher, that most wicked men do receive least punishment ; and many there are, as princes, and high potentates, whose lives and actions, be they never so vicious, yet are they above the correction of mortal men : and many poor men on the contrary, who for their virtue, patience, and honesty, receive nothing in this life, but envy, malice, contempt, reproach, despite and oppression.

* See of this matter, *Socrates in Apologia Plato in Cratyl & in Gorgia. & in phæd. & in l. 10. de lig. Plut. de sera numinis vindicta.* And others.

* Wherefore, says he, either there wants providence, and equity in the government, and disposition of these great affairs, which we see not to be wanting in things of lesser moment : or else there must be a place of punishment and reward in the life to come, for the souls of such, as pass from hence ; and a just and powerful judge, to make recompence of these inequalities, and injustices, permitted in this world : which judge can be none but the Creator himself.

And so hitherto I have declared, how every particular science, among the *Gentiles*, had particular means and ways to demonstrate God, by contemplation of his creatures, and by force of reason, which no man could deny. Now it remains to shew, how the *Jew*, or faithful *Israelite*, before Christ's appearance, was able to confirm this verity to a *heathen*, which shall be the subject of the following section.

S E C T. III.

How the Jews were able to prove God.

The people of *Israel* God's partage.

THE people of *Israel*, who for many years and ages were the peculiar people and partage of God ; as they dwelt environ'd with *Gentiles*, of each side, that im-

impugn'd their religion and worship of one God ; and had many weaklings among themselves, that were often tempted to doubt of the same religion, by the example of so many nations and countries about them, that made profession of a contrary religion : so had the divines and learned men of this people, divers forcible proofs and most reasonable arguments peculiar to themselves, besides the gift of faith, or any other demonstration that has been alleged, to confirm their brethren in the belief of one God, and to convince all atheists or infidels in the world.

And tho' these proofs which they used, were many ; as the creation of the world by one God ; the deriving of the *Hebrew* religion from the beginning ; the conversation of God with *Abraham*, of whom the *Jews* descended ; the miraculous delivering of that nation from *Egypt* ; the law received from God's own mouth by *Moses* ; the strange entrance of *Jews* into the land of promise ; the extinguishing of the *Gentiles* who before inhabited there : the erection of the *Jewish* monarchy, and protection thereof against all other nations ; the miraculous deeds and sayings of Prophets, and a thousand things and reasons besides, which confirm most evidently, that the *Jews* God was the only true God. Yet because all these things and sayings with an infidel, had no more credit than the writings or Scriptures wherein they were recorded ; hereby it came to pass, that all, which a *Jew* could say for the proof of God, more than a *Gentile*, depended only upon the authority of his Scriptures supported by tradition. And for this cause he referr'd all his proofs and arguments to make evident the truth and certainty of the Scriptures, which thing once perform'd, the being of one God cannot be call'd in controversy : for the Scriptures are nothing else but a narration of the acts and gifts of that only one God, whom the *Jews* acknowledged.

We are now then to see, what the *Jew* was able to say for proof of his Scriptures ; and consequently, for demon-

Divers things whereby *Jews* shew God.

Comfort-
ble to hear
the cer-
tainty of
Scriptures
declared.

demonstration of God; and of his judgments declared therein. Which discourse, as it was profitable in old times, for to encourage and confirm all such, as were or might be tempted with infidelity: so can it not be but very comfortable to us Christians of these days, to behold the certainty of these Scriptures laid before us, upon which the foundation of our whole faith depends.

The first
proof of
Scriptures
antiquity.

* *Josephus*
L. 10. cont.
Appianam.
handles
this at
large.
Eusebius
assigns
them 570,
in chron:

First, therefore, the *Jew* for proof of his Scriptures, alleges, the great and wonderful antiquity thereof. For as God, says he, was before idols, and truth before falsehood; so was the Scripture, which is the history of the true God, long before the writings of *Pagans* or * *Infidels*. Nay, further he shews, that the most part of things, recounted in the bible, were done before most of the *Pagan* gods were extant; and that the very last writers of the *Hebrew* canon, which are *Esdra*s, *Aggeus*, *Zacharias*, and *Malachi*, writ almost six hundred years before the coming of Christ, when the second monarchy of *Persians* began, and consequently were before the most ancient heathen historiographers; to wit, before *Hellanicus*, *Herodotus*, *Pherecides*, *Thucydides*, and *Xenophon*.

Eupheme-
rus Messen.
in Geneal.
Deorum.

And altho' the *Gentiles* had some poets before, as *Orpheus*, *Homer*, and *Herodotus*, and *Lycurgus* the law-maker, who lived a good while after these; yet the eldest of these arrived no higher than the days of king *Solomon*; which was five hundred years after *Moses* the first writer of the bible. Long after whose time, the greatest part of heathen gods were unborn; as *Ceres*, *Vulcan*, *Mercury*, *Apollo*, *Æsculapuis*, *Castor*, *Pollux*, and *Hercules*, as the *Gentiles* themselves, in their genealogies, do confess. And as for *Abraham*, that lived five hundred years before *Moses*, he was not only elder than the lesser gods, which I have named; but also than *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, *Pluto*, and such others; who for dignity's sake and antiquity, are call'd by the *Gentiles*, *Dii majorum Gentium*, the gods of the first class. And yet before

Cic. de nat.
Deorum.

before *Abraham*, do the Scriptures contain the history of two thousand years, or thereabouts.

So by this it is evident, that the writings of heathens, and the multitude of their gods are but late fables, in respect of the old, and venerable antiquity of *Hebrew* Scripture; and consequently, the authority of the Scriptures, must in reason be greater, than of all other writings in the world besides; seeing they were extant before all others, in those first times of simplicity and sincerity; and were in part translated into divers languages, before the monarchy of the *Persians*, that is, before any histories of the *Gentiles* were written, as *Eusebius*, declares, out of many heathen authors.

*Euseb. l. 9.
de præp.
Evang.
cap. 2, 3, 4.*

Next to the reason of antiquity, is alleged the manner of writing, authorising, and conserving these Scriptures, which is such, as greatly confirms the certainty of things contain'd therein. For first, whatsoever is set down in these writings, was either taken immediately from the mouth of God, as were the prophecies and books of the law; or else collected from time to time by general consent, according as matters and miracles fell out; as were the book of *Judges*, the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, and some others, that contain records and histories of times. Which books were not gather'd by some one private man, upon hear-say, or by his own imagination, long after things were pass'd; as heathen histories, and other prophane records and monuments are: but they were written by general agreement, in the self-same days, when things were in sight and knowledge of all men, and so could not be feign'd.

The proof
of Scrip-
tures.
Their
manner of
writing and
conserving.

Secondly, when books were written, they were not admitted into the canon or authority of Scriptures, that is, of God's word, or divine writings, but upon great deliberation, and most evident proof of their undoubted verity. For either the whole congregation or synagogue, who had the approving hereof, and among whom commonly were divers Prophets, did know most certainly

How Scrip-
tures were
authorised.

certainly the things and miracles that were recorded in these writings, containing their history to be true, as did also the whole people: or else they saw the same confirm'd from God by signs and wonders; as it fell out in the books of their Prophets, and of their law-giver *Moses*.

The care
of conser-
vation.

Thirdly, when any thing was written and admitted for Scripture, the care of conservation thereof was such, and the reverence of *Jews* thereunto so great, as easily to assure us, that no corruption or alteration could happen unto it. For first, the thing was copied out into twelve authentical copies, for all the twelve tribes; and then again in every tribe there were as many copies made as were particular synagogues within that tribe. All was done by special notaries, scribes, over-seers, and witnesses. The copies after diligent review taken, were laid up by the whole congregation in the treasure-house of the temple, under divers locks, and keys, not to be touch'd, but by men appointed; nor to be used, but with singular reverence. To add, diminish, corrupt, or alter, was present death by the laws of the nation. And how then was it possible, says the *Jew*, that among these writings, either falshood should creep in, or truth once received, could afterwards be corrupted?

The
esteem that
Jews had
of their
Scriptures.

It is impossible, says he, in reason; and therefore he observes another thing relating to this cause, which in truth, is of very great moment; to wit, that no other nation under heaven, did ever so much esteem their own writings, as to offer themselves to die for the same, whereas the *Jews* were ready to do it for every sentence and syllable of their Scriptures. Whence also it did proceed, that in all their miseries and afflictions, wherein they were a spectacle to all the world, in their flights and banishments to *Ægypt*, *Babylon*, *Persia*, *Media*, and other corners of the earth; in all their misfortunes, assaults, and devastations at home; yet they ever had special care to conserve these writings,

more

more than their own lives : and so have kept the same without maim or corruption, more ages together, than all the nations in the world have done any other monuments.

The third perswasion which is used by the Jew for the verity of his Scriptures, is, the consideration of the particular men, that wrote them; who were such, as in reason cannot be suspected of deceit or falshood. For, as I have said, the stories of the bible were written from time to time by publick authority, and by the testimony of all men, that saw and knew the things that are rehearsed. The books of Prophecies were indited by the Prophets themselves, who were plain, simple, and sincere men, authorised from God by continual miracles; and yet so scrupulous and timorous of their own speeches, that they durst say nothing, but only, *Our Lord says this; the God of Hosts commands that, &c.*

The third proof of Scriptures.

The sincerity of the writers.

And when they had preach'd, and read their writings in the hearing of all the people, they protested, that it was not man's word, but God's; and that for such they left it in the publick treasury of their nation, until by tract of time, the event and fulfilling of their Prophecies should prove them true, as it always did; and their own both lives and deaths declare, that they meant no falshood; their lives being such, as were not subject to the corruption, pride, vanity, or ambition of this life, as other prophane and heathen writers were; and their deaths, for the most part, offer'd up in holy martyrdom, for defence of that truth which they had preach'd and written: as appears in *Isaiab*, that was sawed in pieces by king *Manesses*: in *Jeremiah*, that was stoned to death by the common people: in *Ezekiel*, that was slain by the captain of the *Jews* at *Babylon*: in *Amos*, whose brains were beaten out by *Amasias* the wicked and idolatrous priest in *Bethel*: in *Micheas*, whose neck was broken by prince *Joram* son to king *Achab*: in *Zackary*, that was slain at the altar, and the like,

The lives and deaths of the Prophets.

See *Epi-phan. de vitis prophetarum.*

And

A peculiar
considera-
tion of
Moses, first
writer in
the bible.

And this for the Prophets of later times among the *Jews*. But now if we consider the first Prophet of all, that wrote among that people, I mean *Moses*, that was not only a Prophet, but also an historiographer, a law-giver, a captain, and a priest; the first that ever reduced the people to a commonwealth; and the first that put their acts, and gifts in writing, or rather the acts and gifts of almighty God towards them: this man, I say, if we consider him only, I mean the circumstance of his person, the *Jew* thinks this a sufficient motive, to make any man of reason believe whatsoever he has left written in the bible, without further confirmation.

Euseb. l. 9.
§ 10. de
præp. E-
van. Jo-
seph. l. 1.
cont. Ap-
pio. l. § 2.
anti.

And first as to his antiquity, I have spoken before, and the heathens do confess it: and as for the miracles done by him, the greatest enemies that ever he had in the world, that is, *Appion* in his fourth book against *Jews*, and *Porphyrius* in his fourth book against Christians, do acknowledge them: and *Porphyrius* adjoins more for proof thereof, that he found the same confirm'd by the history of one *Saconiathon* a *Gentile*, who lived, as he says, at the same time with *Moses*. But what? all those miracles, say they, were done by art-magick, and not by the power of God, as *Moses* boasted.

Exod. 3.
4, 8.
The mira-
culous
works of
Moses.

But then the *Jew* asks them, where *Moses*, a shepherd, could learn so much magick? or why could not the magicians of *Pharaoh*, whose study was in that profession from their infancy, either do the like, or at least deliver themselves from the plagues of *Ægypt*? why did they cry out, *The finger of God is here*? where did you ever hear such works done by magick, as *Moses* did, when he divided the red sea? when he call'd into his camp so many quails upon the sudden, as sufficed to feed six hundred thousand men, besides women and children? when he made a rock to yield forth a fountain? when he caused a dew to fall from heaven, that nourish'd his whole camp for forty years together? when he caused the ground to open, and swallow up alive three of the richest noble men of all his army, together with

Exod. 16.
Num. 11.
Jos. 5.
Psal. 77.

Num. 16.

with their tabernacles, and all whatsoever belong'd to them? when he caused a fire to come from heaven, and consume fifty gentlemen adherents to the former rebels, without hurting any one that stood about them?

*Joseph. l. 4.
Antiq. c. 2.
E 3.*

These things did *Moses* and many others in the sight of all his army; that is, in the sight of so many hundred thousand people, among whom there were divers his emulators, and sworn enemies, as by the history and Scripture it self appears. *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*, with their faction, sought in all things to disgrace him, and to diminish his credit; and therefore if any one point of these miracles had been reprobable, *Moses* would never have durst to put the same in writing; nor would the people have stood with him, and much less have received his writings for divine, and for God's own words, being solicited against him by so potent means; had they not known all things therein contain'd to be true, or had they not seen his strange miracles, and familiarity with God.

*Num. 16.
Deut. 1. 1.
Psalm 22.
5.*

But he dealt plainly and simply in this behalf; he wrote the things of his own doings, which every man present did know to be true: and of God's speeches and communications to himself, he wrote as much as he was commanded, whereof both God, and his conscience did bear him witness. He caused the whole to be read unto the people, and laid up in their sacred ark and tabernacle, as God's own writing and covenant with that nation. He caused all the whole army to swear and vow the observance thereof. And drawing towards his death, he made a most excellent exhortation unto them, persuading them sincerely to the service of their God; and confessing his own infirmities, and how for his offences he was to die, before their entrance into the land of promise. He concealed not the offences of his brother *Aaron*, or of his grand-father *Levi*, of his sister *Mary*, and others of his kindred, as worldly princes for their honour are wont to do; neither did he go about to bring into the government after his decease, any one of his own

*The plain
and sincere
proceeding
of Moses.*

*Num. 20.
E 27.
Deut. 31.*

*Exod. 32.
Gen. 49.
Num. 12.
Deut. 14.*

Nam. 1. fons, which is greatly to be observed ; notwithstanding
Deut. 3. 7. he left behind him such as were fit for that station, and himself of power to place them in it, if he had endeavour'd : but he left the government to a stranger, named *Joshua*, as God had commanded him.

All which things, says the *Jew*, do prove sufficiently, that *Moses* was no man of ambition, or of worldly spirit, but a true servant of God, and consequently, that wrought not by magick or falsehood, but by the only power of his Lord and Master ; and that his writings are true, and of the same authority, as in his life and death he affirm'd them to be, to wit, the undoubted word of almighty God.

The fourth
proof of
Scriptures
consent.

This he confirms yet further by a fourth reason, which is the consent and approbation of all later writers of the bible, that ensued after *Moses*. For as among prophane writers of worldly spirit, it is a common fashion for him that follows, to reprehend the former, and to hunt after praise by his ancestors disgrace : so it is a most certain argument, all these writers of the bibles, were guided by one spirit from God, that in continuance of so many ages, and thousand years, no one yet ever impung'd the other, but always the latter supposing and approving the former for true, does build thereupon, as upon a sure foundation. So the writings of *Joshua* do confirm and approve the writings of *Moses* ; and the records of the *Judges* do reverence and allow the book of *Joshua*. The history of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, does refer itself to the history of *Judges*. One Prophet confirms another. And finally Christ approves them all, by the known division of Law, *Psalms*, and Prophets ; which is a demonstration, that all their spirits agreed in one.

Four con-
siderations
external.

And thus hitherto have been declared these four considerations, that are external, that is, not taken from the word of the book itself, as to what it contains : to wit, the antiquity and continuance of the Scriptures ; the manner of their being writ and preserved from corruption ; the sincerity, virtue, and simplicity of their writers ;

writers; together with their agreement and coherence in one spirit. But now further says the learned *Jew*, if you will but open the book it self, and look into the text, and that which therein is contain'd: you will see God's own hand, God's own characters, God's own sign and seal, and subscription to the paper. You will see God's omnipotence, God's spirit, God's providence, no less in these letters of his book, than you beheld the same before, in the tables of his creatures: nay, much more, says he, for these letters were devised for declaration of those tables; to the end such, who by reason of their blindness could not see him in his creatures, might learn at least to read him in his Scriptures.

Considerations internal.

Consider then first, says he, the subject or argument which the Scriptures do handle, together with the scope and end, whereto they do level. You will find, that the first is nothing else, but the acts and gifts of one eternal God, as before has been mention'd; and the second nothing else, but the only glory and exaltation of the same great God, together with the salvation of mankind. And can you find any writings in the world besides, that have so worthy an argument, or so high an end? read all the volumes and monuments of the pagans; turn over all their authors, of what kind, or name, or profession soever, and see what mention they make of these two things, I mean, of the honour of God, and of the salvation of man? read their philosophers, and see whether ever they name or pretend these things; read their historiographers, and mark how many battles and victories they attribute unto God. They will describe to you often the particular commendation of every captain; they will defraud no one soldier of his praise in the victories; they will attribute much to the wisdom of the general; much to his courage; much to his watchfulness; much to fortune; they will attribute to the place, to the wind, to the weather, to the shining of the Sun, to the raising of the dust in the enemies eyes, to the flying of some

The fifth proof of Scripture.

Their argument and end.

Philosophers. Historiographers.

little bird in the air, and a thousand such petty observations besides; but to God, nothing. Whereas on the contrary in the Scriptures, it is in every battle recorded. *God delivered them into their enemies hands: God overthrew them: God gave the victory.*

Heathen
law-ma-
kers.

Deut. 6.

Prophets
and south-
layers.

Verseifiers
and poets.

Psaln 17.

The vehe-
ment love
of David.
Psaln 72.

Prophane
writings
treat only
of men.

Again, consider the laws, and the law-makers among the *Gentiles*, as *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Draco*, *Numa*, and the like, and see whether you can find any one such law, or tending to such an end as this is of the *Jews*: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul: and shalt love thy neighbour, as thy self.* Consider in all the southsayers and diviners among the *Gentiles*, whether they used to say in their predictions, as the Prophets of *Israel* did: *Dominus dixit*: our Lord has spoken it: or else: *Ego dico*: I do speak it. Compare their verseifiers and poets with those of the Scripture, and see, whether they have labour'd in the praise of men, or of God. And whereas heathen poets have fill'd up their books, as also the most part of ours at this day, with matters of carnal love; mark whether any of them ever brake forth into such pangs of spiritual chaste love, as holy *David* did, when he said: *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength, our Lord is my firmament, and my refuge, and my deliverer, my God is my helper, and I will hope in him, my protector, and the horn of my salvation.* And again in another verse: *For what is to me in heaven? and besides thee, what would I upon the earth? --- God of my heart, and God my portion for ever.*

By all which it is evident, that as prophane writings and writers, which do treat of men, extol men, seek the grace of men, refer all to the commodity and good liking of men, do proceed from the spirit of man, and are subject to those infirmities of falshood, error, and vanity, wherewith man is intangled in this life: so the Scriptures, which handle matters above the compass of flesh and blood; that refer all to God, and supernatural ends, could not proceed from nature or human spirit.

spirit. For by nature the *Jews* were men, as the *Gentiles* were, and had their infirmities of flesh and blood, as the others had. And therefore it must needs be concluded, these high and supernatural writings among them, proceeded from God that specially directed them, and gave them light of understanding above all other nations and people in the world.

Next after the argument and end of the Scriptures, the *Jew* would have us to consider the peculiar stile and phrase which they use; for, says he, it being different from all other manner of writing in the world, and unimitable to man, it does discover the finger of God, by which it was framed. For, whereas human writers do labour much in adorning their stile, and reducing their words to number, weight, measure, and sound, with addition of many figures, and other ornaments, for to allure the reader; the Scripture takes quite another course, and uses a most marvellous simplicity, thereby to accommodate itself to the capacity of the weakest: yet always carrying with it so great profundity, that the most learned, in search thereof, must necessarily confess their own ignorance. For example sake; consider but the first words of the bible; *In the beginning, God created heaven and earth; and the earth was void and vacant; and darkness was upon the face of the depth, and the spirit of God was moved over the waters; and God said: be light made; and light was made, &c.* What can be more plain and simple, than this narration, to instruct the unlearned about the beginning and creation of the world? and yet, when learned men come to examine every point thereof, how, and what, and where, and in what manner, and when things were done; it astonishes them all to consider the difficulties, which they find, and the depth of so infinite and inscrutable mysteries.

Besides this, there is found with the same simplicity, a strange majesty and gravity of speech, declaring sufficiently from how great and potent a prince it proceeds. For, as great monarchs in their edicts, and proclamations,

The sixth proof of Scriptures, their stile. See St. Aug. of this at large, lib. 12. de civ. Dei.

Simplicity.

Profundity.

Gen. 1.

The gravity and majesty of speech in the Scriptures.

*Deut. 4.
16, 22.*

tions, are wont to speak unto their subjects, not in figures and rhetorical phrases, but plainly, briefly, and peremptorily, to shew their authority: so the Scriptures, to declare whose edicts they are, use the like manner of phrase and stile to all the world, without alluring or flattering any man, and without respect of monarch, emperor, prince, or potentate. *Fac hoc, & vires:* do this, and thou shalt live: *si peccaveris in me, morieris in æternum:* if thou sin against me, thou shalt die everlastingly.

The force
of the
Scriptures
in moving
affections.

And altho' as I have said, the Scriptures do use this simplicity of speech, and do not admit that kind of painted and artificial stile, which human writers do so much covet: yet in persuading, instructing, moving of affections, and all other effects which speech or writing can work; there is no comparison, which is most wonderful, between any other writings in the world, and these. Whereof I could allege many proofs and examples; but it would be too long. Let any man read attentively but the first chapter of the prophecy of *Isaiab*, and compare it with any one part or parcel of *Tully's*, or *Demosthenes* orations, and see, whether the difference of words be as great, as the difference of notions? let divers hymns, and holy *Psalms* of the Scriptures be conferr'd with the most pathetical poems, that man's wit has invented, and see whether there be any comparison in stirring and firing of affections, or no?

*Flavius
Josephus
de Antiq.
Judaic.*

See *St. Hierom. lib. de
scrip. Eccl.
Gen. 22.
Judic II.*

This I am sure, that *Josephus* the Jew, who for glory of his eloquence, had his image of metal, erected by *Titus* the emperor in the market-place of *Rome*, wrote the same story which the Scriptures contain; and bestow'd much labour, and human cunning therein. But yet, even in those places, where he endeavour'd most to shew his art, as in the sacrifice of *Isaac* by his father; and in the meeting of *Jephtha* with his only daughter, whom by vow he was constrain'd to put to death, the Scriptures are able to pierce the heart, and wring out tears of the reader; whom *Josephus* will not greatly move

move with his rhetorical oration, tho' otherwise very learned, and artificially penn'd.

Aristæus that learned *Gentile*, of whom we have made mention before, who was in special favour with *Ptolomy* the second great monarch of *Ægypt*, about three hundred years before Christ's nativity; and a chief undertaker in procuring the translation of the *Hebrew* bible into the *Greek* language, reported, of his own knowledge, to the king, two strange accidents which had happen'd in his time, and which he had understood of the parties themselves, to whom they had happen'd. The first was of *Theopompus* an eloquent historiographer, who having translated certain things out of the bible; and endeavouring to adorn the same with vain colours of eloquence; could not perform his desire, but was stricken with a sudden maze and giddiness in the head; and was warn'd in his sleep, not to proceed further in that work after that sort: for such manner of stile was too base for such high matters, as the Scriptures contain'd.

Two miracles reported by *Aristæus*.

Aristæus libello de translatione Bibliorum & apud *Eus.* l. 8. de præp. evan. cap. 2. *Theopom.*

The other example was of *Theodactes*, a writer of tragedies, who told *Aristæus*, that once he attempted to bring a certain matter out of the *Jewish* bible, into a pagan tragedy, and that thereupon he was presently struck blind; whereupon he being astonish'd, and falling to repentance for what he had done; and desisting from the enterprize, as also *Theopompus* did: they were both of them restored again to their health. And thus much did three pagans confess, of the authority, divinity, and peculiar sacred stile of our Scriptures.

But now further it ensues in order, that after the stile and phrases, we should consider a little the contents of the Scriptures, which will, perhaps, more clearly direct us to the view of their author, than any thing else, that hitherto has been said. And for our present purpose, I will note only two special things contain'd in the bible. The first shall be certain high and hidden doctrines, which are above the reach and capacity of human reason, and consequently, could never fall into

The seventh proof of Scriptures, the contents.

High doctrines.

man's brain to invent them. As for example ; that all this wonderful frame of the world, was created of nothing, whereas philosophy says, *That of nothing, nothing can be made* : that Angels being created spirits, were damn'd eternally for their sins : that *Adam*, by disobedience in paradise, drew all his posterity into the obligation of that his sin ; and that the woman's seed should deliver us from the same : that God is one in substance, and three in persons : that the second of these persons being God, should become man, and die upon a cross for mankind : that after him, the way to all felicity and honour should be by contempt, suffering, and dishonour. These doctrines, I say, and many more contain'd in the bible, being things above man's capacity to devise, and nothing agreeing with human reason, most evidently declare, that God was the author and inditer of the Scriptures ; for by him only, and from no other, these high and secret mysteries could be revealed.

The prophecies in Scripture declare their author.

Isaiah 41. 23.

The second thing contain'd in Scriptures, that could not proceed but from God alone, are certain prophecies or foretellings of things to come. Wherein God himself challenges the idols of the *Gentiles*, to make experience of their power in these words : *Shew what things are to come hereafter ; and we shall know that ye are gods*. Which is to be understood, if they could foretel particularly, and plainly, what was to come in things meerly contingent, or depending of man's will, they should thereby declare their power to be divine.

How the devils and other creatures may foretel things to come.

For altho' the idols of *Gentiles*, as *Apollo* and others that gave forth oracles, (which were nothing else indeed, but certain wicked spirits, that took upon them these names) did sometimes happen upon the truth, and foretel things to come ; as also some astrologers, southayers, and magicians do, either by knowing the motions of the stars, and other elements, or by the assistance of these wicked spirits and devils ; yet are the things which they prognosticate, either natural and not contingent ;

contingent; and so may be foreseen and foretold in their causes; as in rain, heat, cold, winds, and the like: or else, if they were accidental, these predictions of theirs were only conjectures, and so, most uncertain and subject to errors.

This *Porphyrius*, the great patron of paganism testifies, in a special book of the answers of his gods, wherein he swears, that he has gather'd truly without addition or detraction, the oracles that were most famous before his time, with the false and uncertain event thereof; in consideration of which event, he sets down his judgment of their power in predictions, after this manner. “ The gods do foretel some natural things to come, for they do observe the order and conjunction of their natural causes. But of things that are contingent, or do depend of man’s will, they have but conjectures only, in that by their subtilty and celerity they prevent us. But yet they oftentimes do lie, and deceive us in both kinds; for, as natural things are variable, so man’s will is much more mutable.”

The opinion of a heathen, touching the prophecies of his gods.

Porphyr. l. de resp. & orac.

Thus far *Porphyrius* of the prophecies of his gods, whereunto agrees another heathen of great credit among the *Grecians*, named *Oenomaus*, who, for having been much delighted with oracles, and more deceived: wrote a special book in the end, of their falshood and lies; and yet shews, that in many things wherein they deceived, it was not easy to convince them of open falshood; for they would involve their answers, purposely with such obscurities, generalities, equivocations, and doubtfulness; that they would always leave themselves a corner, wherein to save their credit, when the event should prove false. As for example, when *Cræsus*, that famous and rich monarch of *Lydia*, consulted with *Apollo*, whether he should make war against the *Persians*, and thereby obtain their empire; or no? *Apollo*, desirous of bloodshed, as all wicked spirits are, gave his oracle in these words, for to deceive *Cræsus*: *If Cræsus, without fear, shall pass over Halys, (this*

Oenomaus de falsitate oraculorum & de artificibus male.

Deceitful oracles.

Euseb. l. 5. de præp. evang. c. 10.

was

was a river that lay between him and *Persia*) *he shall bring to confusion a great rich kingdom.* Upon which words, *Cræsus* passed over his army, in hopes of conquering *Persia* ; but soon after, he lost *Lydia*, by misunderstanding this doubtful prophecy.

The circumstances of prophecies in the Scriptures.

This then is the imbecility of both human and angelical power, in prognosticating things to come, which are meer contingents. In which kind, notwithstanding, seeing that the Scriptures have many and almost infinite prophecies, foretold many years, and sometimes ages, before they came to pass, set down in plain, particular, and resolute speech, at such times as there was neither cause to conjecture them, nor probability that ever they would be true ; deliver'd by simple and unlearned persons, that could foresee nothing by skill or art ; and yet, that all these, by their events, have proved most true, and never any one thing in the same has fail'd : this, I say, alone, does convince most apparently, (all proofs and reasons, and other arguments laid aside) that these Scriptures are of God, and of his eternal and infallible spirit. And therefore of these prophecies I will allege in this place, some few examples.

I. The prophecy to *Abraham* for his posterity. *Gen.* 12. 13, 15, 17, 28.

Abraham, the first father and special patriarch of the *Jews*, had many prophecies and predictions made unto him ; as, of his issue, when he had yet none, nor ever like to have ; of his inheriting the land of *Canaan*, and the like. But this, which follows, is wonderful, of his posterity's descent into *Ægypt* ; of their time of servitude, and manner of deliverance thence ; the same being foretold more than four hundred years before it was fulfill'd ; and at that time when no likelihood thereof in the world appear'd. The words are these: *Know and foreknow, that a pilgrim shall thy seed be in a land not their own (and they shall bring them under bondage, and afflict them) four hundred years : but the nation whom they shall serve I will judge : and after this they shall go forth with*

with great substance. This is the prophecy, and how exactly it was afterwards fulfill'd by the ruin of the *Ægyptians*, and deliverance of the *Israelites*, even at that time which is here appointed, not only the book of *Exodus* does declare, where the whole story is laid down at large; but also the consent of * heathen writers, as has before been touch'd. And it is specially to be noted, that this prophecy was so common and well known among all the *Jews*, from *Abraham's* time down unto *Moses*, and so deliver'd by tradition from fathers to their children; that it was the only comfort and hope, not only of all people in their servitude of *Ægypt*, but also of *Moses* and others, that govern'd the people afterwards, for forty years together in the desert; and was the only way to pacify them in their distresses and miseries: and therefore *Moses*, in every exhortation almost, makes mention of this promise and prophecy, as of a thing well known unto them all, and not devised or invented by himself, or any other.

Exod. 12.
Gal. 3.
** Porphy. 4.*
contra
Christ. Ap-
pion. l. 5.
cont. Ju-
dæos.

Long after this, *Jacob*, that was *Abraham's* nephew being in *Ægypt*, and making his testament, said of his fourth son *Judah*: *Judah, thee thy brethren shall praise --- thy fathers children shall adore thee. --- The scepter shall not be taken away from Judah, and a duke out of his thigh, till he come, that is to be sent; and the same shall be the expectation of Gentiles.* Which latter part of the prophecy, all *Hebrews* do expound, that it was meant of the coming of the *Messias*, which was fulfill'd almost two thousand years after at the coming of *Christ*, as shall be shew'd in another special chapter; for at that time king *Herod* a stranger, put the line of *Judah* quite out from the government of *Jury*. But for the first part, touching *Judah's* scepter, it is wonderful to consider the circumstances of this prophecy.

II. The
prophecy
for the go-
vernment
of *Judah*.
Gen. 49.
Joseph de
antiq. l.
14.

For first, when it was spoken and utter'd by *Jacob*, there was no probability of any scepter at all to be among the *Jews*; for the *Israelites* or sons of *Jacob*, at that day, were poor and few in number, and never like to be

Unlikeli-
hoods of
this pro-
phesy.

Exod. 2.
Jof. 19.

be a distinct nation of themselves ; or to depart forth of *Ægypt* again. And secondly, if any such thing should come to pass, if they should ever come to be a people, and have a scepter or government of their own ; yet was it not likely that *Judah*, and his posterity should possess the same ; for he had three elder brothers, to wit, *Ruben*, *Simeon*, and *Levi* ; who in all likelihood were to go before him. And thirdly, when *Moses* recorded, and put in writing this prophecy, which was divers hundred years after *Jacob* had spoken it, it was much less likely it should ever be true ; for *Moses* then present in government was of the tribe of *Levi*, and *Joshua* design'd by God for his successor, was of the tribe of *Ephraim*, and not of *Judah* ; which makes greatly for the certainty of this record : for it is most apparent, *Moses* would never have put such a prophecy in writing, to the disgrace of his own tribe, and to the prejudice and offence of *Ruben*, *Simeon*, *Ephraim*, and other tribes : neither would they ever have suffer'd such a derogation, but that it was evident to them by tradition, their grandfire *Jacob* had spoken it : altho' then, there was no great likelihood it ever after should come to be fulfill'd.

1 Reg. 1.
E 8.

Saul.

And this was for the time of *Moses*. But yet consider further, that from *Moses* to *Samuel*, who was last of all the judges, there pass'd four hundred years more : and yet was there no appearance of fulfilling this prophecy to *Israel* ; for the tribe of *Judah* was not establish'd in government. At length they came to have kings to rule ; and then was there chosen one *Saul* to that place, not of the tribe of *Judah*, but of *Benjamin*, and he indu'd with divers children to succeed him. And who could then have thought this prophecy could have been fulfill'd ? yet, as it was God's word, it must needs take place ; and therefore when no man thought thereof, there was a poor * shepherd chosen out of the tribe of *Judah* to be king ; and the government and scepter so establish'd in his posterity, that, notwithstanding many

* David.

1 Reg. 16.

ever

ever *Saul* did, who was put out before: and tho' ten tribes, at once, broke from *Judab*, and never return'd to obedience again; but conspired with the *Gentiles*, and other enemies of every side, to extinguish the said kingdom and government of *Judab*: yet for the fulfilling of this prophecy, the government of *Judab* held out still, for more than a thousand and two hundred years together, until *Herod's* time, as I have said: which is more than any one family in the world besides can shew for his nobility, or continuance in government.

The same *Jacob*, when he came to bless his little nephews, *Manasses* and *Ephraim*, that were *Joseph's* children, though himself was now dim of sight, and could not well discern them; yet did he put his right hand upon the head of the younger, and his left hand upon the elder, and that of purpose, as it proved afterwards: for when *Joseph* their father misliked the placing of their grand-father's hands, and would have removed the right hand from *Ephraim*, and would have placed it upon the head of *Manasses*, that was the elder; *Jacob* would not suffer him, but answer'd, I know that *Manasses* is the elder, and he shall be multiplied into many people; but yet his younger brother shall be greater than he. Which afterwards was fulfill'd; for *Ephraim* was always the greater and stronger tribe, and in fine, became the head of the kingdom of *Israel*, or of the ten tribes, whereof there was no suspicion or likelihood, when *Jacob* spoke this, or when *Moses* recorded it. And how then came *Jacob* to foresee this, so many hundred years before? as also to foresee and foretel the particular places of his childrens habitations in the land of promise; as of *Zabulon*, at the sea-side; of *Asser*, in the fertile pastures; and of other the like, that fell out by casting lots, after four hundred years and more? whence had he this, I say, to foretel what lots so long after should appoint, but only from God, who govern'd their lots?

3 Reg. 12.
2 Para. 11.
The wonderful providence of God towards the house of *Judab*.
Euseb. in *Chron.*

III. The prophecy for the greatness of *Ephraim* above *Manasses*.

Gen. 48:

Jos. 16,
& 17.

Ecclef. 47.
Isa. 7, &
28.

Jerem. 31.
Ezek. 37.

Oze. 5.

Gen. 49.

Jos. 14.

Excd. 12.

Gal. 3.

Acts 13.

The

IV. The
fore-sight of
Moses.

Num. 34,

35, 36.

Jos. 15,

16, 17.

Deut. 31.

21.

The like might be ask'd concerning *Moses*, who before his death in the desert, divided out the land of *Canaan* to every tribe, even as though he had been in possession thereof, and as afterwards it fell out by casting of lots; as in the books of *Joshua* it does appear. And could any human wit or science, think you, foresee what each tribe should attain, after his death, by drawing of lots? again, the same *Moses* foresaw, and foretold in publick hearing of all the people, how, in times to come, long after his death, the *Jews* should forsake God, and for their sins be cast into many banishments, and finally be forsaken, and the *Gentiles* received in their room, as indeed it came to pass. And whence, judge you, could he learn this, but from God alone.

V. The
prophecy
for the per-
petual de-
solation of
Jericho.

Josh. 6.

3 *Reg.* 16.

In the book of *Joshua*, there is a curse laid upon the place where *Jericho* stood, and upon whatsoever person should go about to rebuild the same: to wit, *That in his eldest son, he should lay the foundations; and in his youngest son, should he build the gates thereof*: which is to say, that before the foundations were laid, and gates built, he should be punish'd with the death of all his children. Which thing was fulfill'd, almost five hundred years after, in one *Hiel*, who presumed, under wicked king *Achab* to rebuild *Jericho* again, and was terrified from the same by the sudden death of *Abiram* and *Segub*, his children, as the book of *Kings* reports, according to the word of our Lord, which he had spoken in the hand of *Joshua*, the son of *Nun*: and since that time to this, no man, either *Jew* or *Gentile*, has taken upon him to raise again the said city, altho' the situation be most pleasant, as by relation of histories, and geographers appears.

VI. The
prophecy
for the
birth and
acts of
Josias.

3 *Reg.* 12.

In the third book of *Kings* is recorded, that when *Jeroboam* had withdrawn ten tribes from the obedience of *Roboam*, king of *Judab*; to the end they might never have occasion to reunite themselves again to *Judab*, by their going to sacrifice in *Jerusalem*, as by the law they were appointed; he built for them a goodly sumptuous high

high altar in *Bethel*, and there commanded them to do their devotions. And when he was one day there present himself, and offering his incense upon the said altar, and all the people looking on; there came a man of God, says the Scripture, and stood before the altar, and cried out aloud, and spoke these words: *Altar, altar! thus saith our Lord: behold a child shall be born to the house of David, named Josias, and he shall immolate upon thee priests of the excelses, which now do burn frankincense upon thee; and he shall burn mens bones upon thee.* 3 Reg. 13.

Thus spoke that man of God in the presence and hearing of all the people, more than three hundred years before *Josias* was born; and it was register'd presently, according to the manner of that time, as I have noted before: and with the same were register'd also the miracles, which happen'd about that fact; as that the altar cleft in two upon the man's words; and *Jeroboam* extending forth his hand to apprehend him, lost presently the use and feeling thereof, until it was restored again by the holy man's prayers; who notwithstanding, for that he disobey'd God's commandment in his return, and eat with a Prophet of *Samaria*, which was forbidden him, was slain in his way homeward by a lion, and his body was brought back again, and buried in *Bethel*, nigh the said altar, amongst the sepulchers of those idolatrous priests of that place; but yet with a superscription upon his tomb, containing his name, and what happen'd.

Disobedi-
ence pu-
nish'd grie-
vously in
God's
dearest.

There passed three hundred years, and *Josias* was born, and came to reign in *Judah*; and one day coming to *Bethel* to overthrow the altar, to destroy the sepulchers of those idolatrous priests, that had been buried in that place; when he began to break their tombs, he found by chance, the sepulcher of the said man of God, with the superscription upon it. By which superscription, and by relation of the citizens of *Bethel*, when he perceived it was the sepulcher of him that had foretold

4 Reg. 23.

Chap. 23.

foretold his birth, his name, and his doings, so many hundred years before he was born ; he let the same stand untouch'd, as the fourth book of *Kings* does declare.

Now consider, whether among any people in the world, but only among the *Jews*, there were ever any such prophecy, so certain, so particular, so long foretold before the time, and so exactly fulfill'd ? but yet the holy Scriptures are full of the like, and time permits me only to touch some few of the principal.

Hieron. in Prolog. Gal VII. The prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and Babylon.

4 Reg. 20.
16.

Isaiah the Prophet is wonderful in foretelling the mysteries and acts of the *Messias* ; his nativity, his life, and all the particulars that happen'd in his passion. In-
somuch that *St. Jerome* says, he may seem rather to write a history of deeds past, than a prophecy of events to come. But yet among other things, it is to be noted, that living in a peaceable and prosperous time in *Judah*, when the *Jews* were in amity and great security with the *Babylonians*, he foresaw and foretold the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the said *Babylonians*, and the grievous captivity of *Jews* under them ; as also the destruction of *Babylon* again by *Cyrus* king of *Persia*, whose express name and greatness he publish'd in writing, almost two hundred years before he was born, saying in the person of God, first, to *Hezekiah* king of *Judah*, that rejoiced in the friendship he had with *Babylon* : *Behold the days shall come, and all things shall be taken away that are in thy house, and that thy fathers have laid up unto this day, into Babylon. Yea of the children also that come forth of thee --- they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.* And next, to *Babylon* he said : *The burthen of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos saw, &c. Howl ye, because the day of our Lord is near, &c.* And thirdly, to *Cyrus*, not yet born, who was pre-ordain'd to destroy the same, and to restore the people from banishment, and to rebuild the temple in *Jerusalem*, he says thus : *Who say to Cyrus ; thou art my pastor, and thou shalt fulfil all my will, who say to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built, and to the temple,*

Isaiah 44.

thou

thou shalt be formed. --- And in the next chapter: *Thus says the Lord, to my Christ Cyrus --- I will go before thee, and will humble the glorious of the earth: I will break the brasen gates, and will burst the iron bars, for my servant Jacob, and Israel my elect, and have called thee by thy name, I have resembled thee, and thou hast not * known me.*

*Isaiah 45. VIII. The wonderful prophecy of Cyrus king of Persia. Isaiah 25. * This he*

Can any thing be more clear or miraculously spoken in the world, than to name a heathen not yet born, that should conquer so strong a monarchy, as *Babylon* was at this time, and should build again the temple of *Jerusalem*, which others of his own religion had destroyed before him? what cause, what reason, what likelihood could be of this? yet *Isaiah* speaks it so confidently, as to say, *that he saw it*: and he names two witnesses thereof, that is, *Urias* and *Zacharias*, that were not born many years after, saying: *and I took unto me two faithful witnesses, Urias the priest, and Zacharias the son of Barachias*: whereof the first was a Prophet in *Jeremiah's* time, a hundred years after *Isaiah*; and the second lived fourscore years after that again, in the days of *Darius*, as by the beginning of his prophecy appears; and yet both, as you see, were distinctly named by *Isaiah*, so long before.

Isaiah 13.

Isaiah 8. 2. Jere. 26. 20.

Zac. 1. 1.

And whereas this book of *Isaiah* was pronounced openly to the people, as other prophecies also were, and publish'd into many thousand hands before the captivity of *Babylon* fell out; and then carried also with the people, and dispers'd in *Chaldea*, and other parts of the world: there can be no possible suspicion of forgery in this matter; for all the world both saw it, and read it, many years before the thing came to pass; yes, when there was no thought of such possibility.

Circumstances of certain truth.

The same captivity and destruction of *Jerusalem*, by the *Babylonians*, was prophesied by *Jeremiah* a hundred years after *Isaiah*, and a little before the matter came to pass. Yea, while the *Babylonians* were about the walls of *Jerusalem*, and besieged the same for two

IX. The prophecies and doings of *Jeremiah* in the siege of *Jerusalem*

years together, *Jeremiah* was within, and told every man, that it was in vain to defend the city; for God had now deliver'd it. And altho' he was counted a traitor for so speaking; especially when by an army of *Ægypt* that came to the aid of *Jerusalem* from *Pharaoh*, the siege of the *Babylonians* was rais'd for a certain time: yet *Jeremiah* continued still his asseveration, and said to *Zedekiah* the king, *thou shalt be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon*. And to the people, *Hæc dicit dominus, tradendo tradetur hæc civitas, &c.*

Jere. 37.

Jere. 38.

Jere. 39.

4 *Reg.* 24.

25.

This saith our Lord, this city most certainly shall be deliver'd into the hands of the *Babylonians*. And so he continued, notwithstanding he was put in prison, and whipt, and threaten'd daily to be hang'd; until indeed the city was taken, and *Zedekiah's* eyes pulled out, his children slain before his face, and all other things perform'd, which *Jeremiah* had prophesied and foretold them before.

And which is yet more marvellous, *Jeremiah* did not only foretel the particulars of this captivity; but also the determinate time, how long it should last, saying: *And all this land shall be in desolation and into astonishment; and all these nations shall serve the king of Babylon, seventy years: and when these seventy years shall be expired, I will visit upon the king of Babylon, and upon that nation, saith our Lord ---- And I will make it into everlasting desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words that I have spoken against it --- Whatsoever Jeremiah has prophe-*

The years
foretold of
the capti-
vity of
Babylon.

Jere. 25.

Jere. 24.

25. &c. 29.

v. 10.

1 *Esd.* 1.

& 2.

3 *Esd.* 2.

sied, &c. In which prophecy is contain'd first, the particular time, how long this captivity should endure. Secondly, the destruction of *Babylon*, and of that monarchy by the *Persians*: and thirdly, the returning home of the *Jews* again; which three things to have been after fulfilled, not only *Esdra*s, that lived at that time, and was an actor in performance of the last, but all other heathen writers besides, do record and testify.

And

And this prophecy of *Jeremiah* was so famous, and certainly believed among all the *Jews*, in the time of their captivity; that when the day of expiration drew near, *Daniel* writes thus of himself: *In the first year of Darius --- I Daniel, understood in books, the number of the years, whereof the word of our Lord was made to Jeremiah the Prophet, that seventy years should be accomplished of the desolation of Jerusalem, and I set my face to our Lord my God, to pray and beseech in fastings, sackcloth and ashes, &c.* Not only the *Jews* understood and believed this prophecy; but even *Cyrus* himself that was a *Gentile*, gave full credit thereunto, and thereby was induced to restore the *Jews*; as appears both by his own word, and proclamation, set down by *Esdras*, that executed the same; and by his deeds also, in restoring home the *Jews*, and rebuilding their temple at his own great charges, as all historiographers of the heathens do confess.

Dan. 9. 1.

Gentiles believed the Scripture.

1 Esd. 3.

3 Esd. 2.

I might here allege infinite other examples, and make no end, if I would follow the multitude of prophecies which are dispersed throughout the whole Scripture. I might shew how *Daniel* foretold to *Baltazar* king of *Babylon*, in the midst of his triumph, and in the hearing of all his peers, the destruction, which ensued upon him the very same night after.

The prophecies of Daniel.

Daniel 5.

I might allege how the same *Daniel*, in the first year of *Darius* the *Median*, in the beginning of that second monarchy of *Medians* and *Persians*, foretold * how many kings should reign after in *Persia*, and how the last who was the fourth after him, and his name also *Darius*, should fight against the *Grecians*, and be overcome by a *Grecian* king, which was *Alexander*; and how that kingdom also of *Greece* should be divided and torn in pieces after *Alexander's* death, and not pass to his posterity, as *Iustin* and other heathen writers do testify it was, by *Antigonus*, *Perdiccas*, *Seleucus*, *Antiochus*, *Ptolomeus*, and other captains of *Alexander*, that divided the same among themselves, above a hundred years after *Daniel* was dead,

Daniel 11.

* Behold three kings shall yet stand in *Persia*, and the fourth shall be rich above all the rest.

Dan. 11. 2.

Iustin.

hist. l. 12.

& 13.

The four
monar-
chies of *Af-*
syrians,
Persians,
and *Ro-*
mans.

Dan. 2.

Dan. 8.

The fore-
telling of
great *Alex-*
ander.

Josepb. l. 1.
de Antiq.

judaic. c. 8.

I might declare how the same *Daniel* foresaw, and foretold the four great monarchies of the world, and described the same as distinctly, as if he had lived in them all, and as by experience we find since to be true. I might allege the particular description of the fight between *Darius* and *Alexander*, set down by *Daniel* under the names of the great ram, and the fierce goat with one horn, which goat he himself interprets to be meant of a *Grecian* king, that should conquer the *Persians*. And therefore *Alexander*, as *Josephus* reports, coming to *Jerusalem* about a hundred years after, and reading this prophecy of *Daniel*, interpreted unto him by *Jaddus* the high priest, assured himself that he was the man therein signified; and so, after sacrifice done to the God of *Israel*, of whom he affirm'd, that he had appear'd unto him in *Macedonia*, and had exhorted him to take this war in hand, and after he had bestow'd much honour and many benefits upon the high priest, and inhabitants of *Jerusalem*; he went forward in his war against *Darius* with great alacrity, and had that famous victory, which all the world knows.

A hundred such prophecies more, which are as plain, as evident, and as distinct as this, I might allege of *Elias*, *Elizæus*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Ezekiel*, the twelve lesser Prophets, and of others, whom I have not named. And indeed, the whole Scripture is nothing else, but a divine kind of body, replenish'd throughout with the vital spirit of prophecy, and every day some prophecy or other is fulfill'd, tho' we mark it not, and shall be to the world's end.

What
manner of
persons our
Prophets
were.

And the miracle of this matter is yet more increased, if we consider, what manner of people they were, for the most part, by whom these prophecies of hidden things were utter'd: to wit, not such men as could gather their foresight of things by astronomy, or astrology, that is, by contemplation of the stars, as some fond *Gentiles* did

Prob. in 1. Pretend (tho' Ptolomy denies that such things can be fore-
d. 1. 1. told, but only by inspiration from God, in which all
learned

learned men do now agree) neither were they so sharp witted, as to attain to prophecy by strong imagination, as most vainly *Averroes* and his followers hold that some men may ; nor finally, were they so delicately fed, as by exact diet and rules of alchymy to come to prophecy, as alchymists dream that a man may do, and that *Apolonius Thyaneus* did ; who by stellified meats, as they speak, came to be stellified himself ; and so by help of his glafs call'd *Alchymusi*, could foretel some matters and affairs to come. Our Prophets, I say, knew none of these fantastical devises, being for the most part poor, simple, and unlearned men, as in particular is recorded, that *David* was a shepherd, and *Amos* was a keeper of oxen : yea, oftentimes they were women, as *Mary* the sister of *Aaron*, call'd in the Scripture by the name of prophetess ; *Deborah* the wife of *Lapidoth* ; *Anna* the mother of *Samuel* ; *Elizabeth* the mother of *John Baptist* ; *Anna* the daughter of *Phanuel* ; and finally, the most holy and blessed virgin *Mary*, with the daughter of *Philippe*, and many such others, both in the Old and New Testament, who prophesied strangely, nor could possibly receive such fore-knowledge of things to come, but only from the spirit of God, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which is a manifest demonstration of the excellency of holy writ, and of the certainty of the things contain'd therein.

*Moles.
Narbon. in
lib. Abuba-
cher & A-
wempase.*

*Roger Bac.
l. de sex.
scient. ex-
perimen-
ta. lib.*

*Amos 1.
Exod. 15.*

Judic. 5.

*1 Reg. 2.
Luke 1. & 2.
Acts 21.*

And now, altho' this might seem sufficient in the judgment and conscience of every reasonable man, as the *Jew* supposes, to prove that the Scriptures are only from God ; and consequently by them, that there is a God : yet has he one reason more to confirm their sincerity, which I will allege in this place ; and therewith make an end. His reason is, that altho' these holy writings which proceed of God's spirit, do not take their testimony or confirmation from man : yet for more evidence of the truth, God has so provided, that all the principal and most strange and wonderful things recounted in Scripture, should be reported also, and

The eighth
proof of
Scriptures.
Approba-
tion of hea-
then wri-
ters.

confirm'd by *Infidels, Pagans, Gentiles*, and heathen writers themselves: altho' in some points they differ from the Scripture in the manner of their narration, by adjoining superstitions thereunto: which makes the more in approbation of the things; for hereby it appears, they took not their histories directly from the bible, but by tradition and most ancient antiquities of their own.

I. The
creation of
the world.
Gen. 1. & 2.

First then he shews, that the creation of the world, which is the marvel of all marvels, with the infusion of man's soul from God, is both granted and agreed upon, by all these heathen philosophers, whom I have cited before (altho' the particularities be not set down by them, as they are in the Scriptures) and by all others that do see in reason, that of necessity, there must be yielded some Creator of these things. Next to this, the flood of *Noah* is mention'd by divers most ancient heathen writers; as by *Berosus Chaldeus, Hieronimus Egyptius, Nicolaus Damascenus, Abydenus*, and others, according as both *Josephus*, and *Eusebius* do prove. And in *Brazil*, and other countries discover'd in our age, where never teachers were known to be before, they talk of a certain drowning of the world, which in times past happen'd; and do say, that was left them by tradition from time out of mind, by the first inhabitants of those places.

II. The
flood of
Noah.
Ger. 6, 7, 8.
Joseph. l. 1.
Antiq. Jud.
Euseb. l. 9.
de præp.
Evang. c. 4.

III. The
long life of
the first fa-
thers.
Gen. 5. &
10, 11.

Of the long life of the first Patriarchs, according as the Scripture reports it, not only the former authors, but also *Manethus*, that gather'd the history of the *Ægyptians*; *Molus Hestius*, that wrote the acts of the *Phœnicians*, *Hesiodus*, *Heccataeus Abderita*, *Helanicus*, *Acusilus*, and *Ephorus* do testify, that these first inhabitants of the world lived commonly a thousand years a-piece; and they allege the reason thereof to be, both for the multiplication of the people, and bringing all sciences to perfection, especially astronomy and astrology, which, as they write, could not be brought to sufficient perfection by any one man, that had lived less than six hundred years, in which space the great year, as they call it, returns about.

Of

Of the tower of *Babylon*, and of the confusion of IV. The
tongues at the same time, *Eusebius* cites the testimonies tower of
at large, both of *Abydenus*, that lived about king *Alex-* *Babylon.*
ander's time; and of *Sibylla*; as also the words of *He-* *Gen. 11.*
stæus, concerning the land of *Sennaar* where it was built.
And these *Gentiles* do shew by reason, that if there *Euseb. l. 9.*
had not been some such miracle in the division of *de præpar.*
tongues, no doubt, but all tongues being derived of *cap. 4.*
one, as all men are of one father, the same tongues
would have retain'd the self-same roots and principles, *Mark this*
as in all dialects or derivations of tongues we see it *reason.*
comes to pass. But now, say they, in many tongues,
at this day, we see that there is no likelihood of affinity
among them, but all different the one from the other;
and thereby it appears, that they were made divers and
distinct even from the beginning.

Of *Abraham* and his affairs, I have alleged some
heathen writers before; as *Berosus*, *Heccatæus*, and *Ni-*
colaus Damascenus. But of all others, *Alexander Poly-*
bistor alleges *Eupolemus* most at large of *Abraham's*
being in *Ægypt*, and of his teaching them astronomy
there; of his fight, and victory in the behalf of *Lot*;
of his entertainment by king *Melchisedech*; of his wife
and sister *Sarah*: and of other things he did, especially
of the sacrifice of his son *Isaac*. With whom agrees
Melo, in his books written against the *Jews*, and *Ar-*
tabanus. And of the strange lake whereinto *Sodom* and
Gomorrab were turn'd by their destruction, call'd *mare*
mortuum, the *dead sea*, wherein nothing can live, both
Galen, *Pausanias*, *Solinus*, *Tacitus*, and *Strabo*, do
testify, and shew the particular wonders thereof.

From *Abraham* down to *Moses*, writes very parti-
cularly the fore-named *Alexander*, altho' he mingles
sometimes some fables, whereby it appears, that he
took his history not wholly out of the bible. And he
alleges one *Leodemus*, who as he says, lived with *Moses*,
and wrote the self-same thing that *Moses* did; so that
these writers agree almost in all things touching *Isaac*,

V. Of A-
brabam.
Gen. 11.
12, 13, 14,
&c.
Alex. Poly.
lib. de Ju-
daicahisto-
ria.
Melo lib. de
fraudibus
Judæorum
Artaban.
in Judæor.
hist. Gal. de
simplic.
Pausan. in
Eliæ. So-
lin. in hist.
Tacit. lib.
ult. hist.

VI. Of
Isaac, Ja-
cob, Job,
Joseph, &c
Gen. 15,
16, 17, 18,
&c.

Jacob, Joseph, and all their affairs even unto Moses; and with these do concur also Theodotus a most ancient poet, Artabanns and Philon, Gentiles. Aristæus in like manner about Aristotle's time wrote a book of Job.

VII. Of *Moses*. Of *Moses* and his acts, not only the fore-named, especially *Artabanus* in his book of the *Jews*, do make mention at large, but many others also; as namely *Eupolemus*; out of whom *Polybistor* recites very long narrations of the wonderful and stupendious things done by *Moses* in *Ægypt*, for which he says, that in his time, he was worship'd as a god in that country, and call'd by many *Mercurius*. And that the *Ethiopians* learned circumcision of him, which afterwards always they retain'd, and do so unto this day. And as for his miracles done in *Ægypt*; his leading the people thence by the red-sea: his living with them forty years in the desert; the heathen writers agree in all things with the Scriptures, saving only, that they recount divers things to the praise of *Moses*, which he has not written of himself; adding also his description; to wit, that he was a long tall man, with a yellow beard, and long hair. Wherewith also agrees *Numenius Pythagoricus*, touching the acts of *Moses*, whose life, he says, that he read in the ancientest records that were to be had.

The description of *Moses's* person out of heathen writers.

VIII. The history of *Joshua*, the *Judges*, and the *Kings*. But the fore-named *Eupolemus*, goes yet forward, and pursues the history of *Joshua*, of the *Judges*, of *Saul*, and *David*, and of *Solomon*, even unto the building of the temple, which he describes at large; with the particular letters written about that matter to the king of *Tyrus*, which *Josephus* says, were in his days kept in the records of the *Tyrians*. And with *Eupolemus*, agree *Polybistor*, and *Heccateus Abderita*, that lived and served in the war with king *Alexander the Great*; and they make

Joseph. l. 8. de antiq. cap. 2.

The treasures hidden in the sepulchre of *David*.

mention, amongst other things, of the inestimable riches of *Solomon*, and of the treasures which he did hide and bury, according to the fashion of that time, in the sepulchre of his father *David*: which tho' not mention'd

mention'd by the Scripture, *Josephus* well proves to be no fable; for that *Hircanus* the high priest and king of *Jury*, being besieged in *Jerusalem* by *Antiochus*, sur-named *Pius*, not many years before Christ's nativity; to redeem himself and the city, and to pay for his peace, * open'd the said sepulchre of *David*, and fetcht out of the one part thereof, three thousand talents in ready money, which amount to six hundred thousand pounds *English*, if we account the talents but at the least size, of *Talentum Hebraicum*.

Joseph. lib. 13. de ant. cap. 16.

*The same thing at-tempted *Herod* in his time, as *Josephus* says, *l. 18. antiq.*

And as for the things which ensued after *Solomon*; as the division of the tribes among themselves; and their divers wars, afflictions, and transigrations into other countries, many heathen writers do mention and record them; and among others *Herodotus* and *Diodorus Siculus*. And the aforementioned *Alexander Polybistor*, talking of the captivity of *Babylon*, says that *Jeremiah* a Prophet, told *Joachim* his king, what would befall him; and that *Nebuchadonosor*; hearing thereof, was moved thereby to besiege *Jerusalem*.

IX. Things that ensued after Solomon's days.

Jere. 37. 4 Reg. 24.

Of the flight of *Senacherib* from the siege of *Jerusalem*, and how he was kill'd at his return home by his own children in the temple, according to the prophecy of *Isaiab*, and history of the book of *Kings*, because he had blasphem'd the Lord God of *Israel*, *Herodotus* witnesses, that after his death, he had a statue or image of metal erected in his memory, with this inscription in *Greek*, *He that beholds me, let him learn to be godly*. Confer *Xenophon* also in his seventh book *De Cyropædia*, and you will see him agree with *Daniel* in his nar-ration of *Babylon*.

Of Sena-cherib.

Ija. 31, & 33, & 36. 4 Reg. 9.

Hero. l. 2.

Dan. 16.

And finally, I will conclude with *Josephus* the learned *Jew*, that wrote immediately after Christ's ascension, and protests, that the publick writings of the *Syrians*, *Chaldeans*, *Phœnicians*, and innumerable histories of the *Grecians*, are sufficient to testify the antiquity, truth, authority, and certainty of holy Scriptures, if there were no other proof in the world besides,

Joseph. l. 1. de antiq. Jud.

S E C T. IV.

The conclusion of the chapter, with the application.

THUS far have I treated of the ways and means, which have been left to the world from the beginning, thereby to know and understand their Maker. In treating which point, I have enlarged my self the more, because it is the ground and foundation of all that is or may be said hereafter. It is the first, and final and chief principle of our eternal salvation or damnation, and of the happiness or misery, that must befall us, and be our everlasting lot.

No excuse
of the ig-
norance of
God.

Which ground and verity, if it be so certain and evident as before has been shew'd by all reason and proof, both divine and human ; and the matter is so testified and proclaim'd unto us, by all the creatures of heaven and earth, and by the mouth and writing of our Creator himself, that no ignorance or blindness can excuse the same ; no slothfulness dissemble it ; no wickedness deny it : what remains then, but to consider with ourselves, what service this God requires at our hands, what gratitude, what duty, what honour, we owe for our creation ; to the end, that as we have proved him a most bountiful Creator, so we may find him a propitious judge, and munificent rewarder. For it is not probable, his divine majesty who has appointed every other creature to act in some manner for his own glory, as has been declared at large before, should leave mankind only, which is the worthiest of all the rest, without any obligation of serving him.

The errors
of the old
philoso-
phers.

Rom. 1.

In which one point notwithstanding, tho' never so clear, such is the foolishness of our corrupt nature without God's holy grace, have fail'd those ancient wise men of the world, of whom St. *Paul* speaks so much in the epistle to the *Romans*, taking compassion of their case, and calling them fools, and all their great learning and philosophy meer folly ; for that whereas, by the means
before

before mention'd, They came to know God ; they did *Rom. 1.*
not seek to glorify him, as appertains unto God ; nor
yet did render him due thanks, but vanish'd away in
their cogitations : that is, they took no profit by this
knowledge of theirs, but applied their cogitations upon
the vanities of this world, more than upon the honour
and service of this their God. For which cause St. *Paul*
adjoins presently in the same place, that for so much as
they did thus, And did not shew forth by their life *Ibid.*
and works, that they had the knowledge of God indeed :
God deliver'd them over to a reprobate sense, and
suffer'd them to fall into horrible sins : which St. *Paul*
does name and detest in all that chapter ; and finally
concludes, that their everlasting perdition ensued prin-
cipally upon this one point ; that whereas, *they knew* *Ibid.*
the justice of God, by all the ways and arguments that
before have been declared : yet would they not under-
stand, that death was due to all such which lived in
wickedness as they did.

And the same Apostle, upon consideration of these
matters, whereon he dwells long, because of the impor-
tance of the subject, pronounces infine this general sen-
tence, with great asseveration and vehemency of spirit :
For the wrath of God from heaven is revealed upon all
impiety and injustice of those men that detain the verity of
God in injustice : because, that of God which is known,
is manifest in them. For God has manifested unto
them. That is, who being endued with the know-
ledge of God, do live notwithstanding unrighteously :
or, as he said before, do consume their days in vanity,
not making account of the service, which they do owe
to that God for their creation and other benefits. Which
thing, if St. *Paul* might truly say unto these *Gentiles*
before his time, who had only natural knowledge and
understanding of God ; that is, so much as by his
creatures was to be gather'd : what may or shall be said
unto us, who have not only that light of nature which
they had, but also the writings and law of God himself,
communi-

A general sentence pronounced by St. Paul.
Ibid.
The application to our selves.

communicated specially unto the *Jews*; and above that also, have heard the voice of his only Son upon earth, and have received the doctrine of his most holy Gospel, and yet do live as negligently, many of us, as did the very heathens, in regard to a good and virtuous life.

Rom. 1.

Luke 12.

Surely in this case, I must denounce against my self, that if it be true, as it cannot be false, which this blessed Apostle affirms here of these heathen philosophers, that by that little knowledge they had of God, *They were made inexcusable*: then by the most just and certain rule of Christ, laid down in St. *Luke*, *Every one to whom much was given, much shall be required of him* for the same. We are forced to infer, that our account will be greater, and our selves much more inexcusable before his divine majesty, than the very *Gentiles* and heathens are, if after all our knowledge and manifest understanding of his Godhead and Justice, We vanish away in our cogitations, as they did, and as most part of the world at this day are seen to do, that is, if we apply our thoughts and cares about the vain affairs of this temporal life and transitory commodities, which we should bestow upon the service and honour of this Lord and Creator.

C H A P. III.

Of the final end and cause why Man was created by God, and placed in this world.

SECT. I. *That man being created to serve God, whatsoever takes him from this end is vanity.*

BY the chapter precedent, I nothing doubt, gentle reader, but if thou hast seen and perused the same, thou remainest sufficiently inform'd of thy Creator. Now follows it, by order of good consequence, that we consider with some attention, because

it

Chap. III. *The end whereunto Man was created.*

it is of great importance to us, what intent and purpose God had in creating us, and this world for our sakes, and in placing us therein, as lords of the same. By the former considerations we have learnt, that as among other creatures, nothing made it self; so nothing was made for it self, nor to serve it self alone. The heavens, we see, do serve the air; the air serves the earth; the earth serves beasts; the beasts serve man: and then is the question, whom was man made to serve? for in him also, holds the former reason, that since he was not made by himself, it is not likely, that he was made to serve himself.

A necessary consideration.

If we consult with the Scriptures herein; we find a general sentence laid down without exception: *Universa propter semetipsum operatus est Dominus.* Our Lord has made all things for himself. And if all, then man likewise, no doubt, who is not the least part of the rest which he has made. And hereby it comes to pass, that man cannot be said to be free, or at his own appointment or disposition in this world, but obliged to perform that thing, for which he was sent into this habitation. Which point, a friend of holy Job declares plainly, in a certain invective, that he makes against such men, as were careless and negligent in consideration of this affair. *A vain man, says he, is extoll'd in to pride, and think himself born free, as a wild ass colt.* That is, he thinks himself bound to nothing, subject to nothing, accountable for nothing that he does in this life; but only born free, to pass his time in sport and pleasure, as a wild colt in a desert, that has no master to tame him. Which, in other words, the wise man utters thus: *They esteem'd our life to be a pastime, and the conversation of life made for a gain,* and therefore cares not how he lives, or wherein he spends and passes over the time. And this of the man, whom the Scripture calls *vain*.

Prov. 16.

Man made to serve God.

Job 11.

Sap. 15.

But now for the sober, wise, and discreet, of whom it is written. *The path of life above the learned, that*

Prov. 15.

he may decline from the lowest hell: they are far from so great folly, as to imagine, no account will be demanded of our being in this world, for they have read:

Eccles. 11. That God shall bring into judgment whatsoever is done, for every fault that is committed. And the

Mark 10. Christian man knows further by the mouth and asseveration of his Saviour and Redeemer, that he shall be accountant for every idle word, that he utters; and finally, there is no man that is either of reason, or conversant in the writings and testament of his Creator, but remembers well, that among all other irritations, whereby the wicked man is said to provoke God's patience to indignation, none is more often repeated, or more grievously taken, than that the impious has said in his heart; he will not enquire.

Psaln 9.

With these men then alone, shall be my speech, in this present chapter, who have a desire to discharge well this account. For attaining whereof, truly, I can give them no better counsel, instruction, or advice, than to do in this case, as a good merchant's factor is wont to do, when he arrives in foreign countries; or as a soldier or captain sent by his prince to some great exploit, is accustom'd, when he comes to the place appointed; that is, to weigh and consider deeply, for what cause he came thither? why he was sent? to what end? what to attempt? what to prosecute? what to perform? what will be expected and required at his hands, upon his return, by him that sent him thither? for these thoughts, no doubt, will stir him up to attend to that for which he came; and not to employ his time in impertinent affairs. The like would I counsel a Christian to put in use, concerning the case proposed, and to demand of himself, between God and his conscience, why and wherefore, and to what end, he was created and sent hither into this world? what to do? wherein to bestow his days, &c. And then will he find, that for no other cause, matter, or end was he created and placed here, but only to serve God

Profitable
demands
and consi-
derations.

in

in this life, and by that service to gain heaven and salvation in the life to come. This was the condition of our creation, as *Moses* well expresses; That we should be a holy people to serve our God: and this was the consideration of our redemption, foretold by *Zachary*, before we were yet redeem'd: *That without fear being deliver'd from the hand of our enemies we may serve him, in holiness and justice before him all our days.*

Deut. 4.

Luke 1.

From this consideration do ensue two consequences to be observed. Whereof the first is, that seeing our end and final cause of being in this world, is to serve God, and thereby to work our own salvation; whatsoever thing we do, or bestow our time in, which either is contrary or impertinent, or not profitable to this end, though it were to gain kingdoms, is but vanity and lost labour, and such as will turn us in time to grief and repentance, if we change not our course: for it is not the matter for which we came into this life, nor whereof we shall be demanded an account; except it be to receive judgment, and punishment for the same.

The first consequence upon due consideration of our end.

Secondly it follows from the same consideration, that seeing our only business and affair in this world, is to serve our Maker, and save our own souls; and that all other earthly creatures are but here to serve our uses to gain that only end; we should, for our parts, be indifferent to all these creatures; as to riches or poverty; to health or sickness; to honour or contempt; to little learning or much learning: and we should desire only so much or little of either of them, as is best for us toward the attaining of our said end; which is the service of God, and the salvation of our souls. For whosoever desires, seeks, loves, or uses these creatures, more than for this, be they what they will, either riches, honours, health, dignity, promotion, children, kindred, or the like, runs from his end, for which he came hither.

The second consequence.

By this then, may a careful Christian take some scantling of his own estate with God, and make a conjecture, whether he be in the right way, or no. For if he attends only,

How each man may take a view of his estate.

only, or principally to this end, for which he was sent hither; if his cares, thoughts, studies, endeavours, labours, talk, conversation, and his other actions, do run upon this matter, and he cares no more for other commodities in this world, than they are necessary or profitable unto him for this end: if his days and life are spent in this study of the service of God, and procuring his own salvation, in carefulness, fear, and trembling, as the Apostle advises him: then is he, doubtless, a most happy and blessed man; and will at length attain to the blessed kingdom, which he expects.

A right
course.

Philip. 2.

A wrong
and danger-
ous course.

But if he finds himself in a contrary current, that is, not to attend indeed to this matter, for which only he was sent hither; not to have in his heart, and study this service of God, and gaining heaven, but rather some other vanity of the world, as promotion, wealth, pleasure, sumptuous apparel, magnificent buildings, beauty, favour of princes, advancement of children or family, or any other thing else, that appertains not unto this end; if he spends his time about these trifles, having his cares and thoughts, his talk and delight more in these things, than about the other great business of gaining God's eternal kingdom, for which he was created and placed in this world: then is he, I assure him, in a perilous way, leading directly to perdition; except he alters and changes his course. For most certain it is, that whosoever will not attend unto the service he came for; he will never attain the reward assign'd, and promised to that service.

And hence now is open'd the reason of so universal a perdition of mankind, and of so huge a deluge of souls, as is insinuated by Christ our Saviour, when he denounces, that few are saved, and that the way to ruin and perdition is wide, and many walk that way; but that straight and narrow is the gate to salvation, and few enter thereby: the reason, I say, hereof is evident by this our discourse; for that, of thousands that live in the world, scarce one is seen to make any account of that

Mat. 7.
20, & 22.
Luke 13.

that affair, which of all others is the chief and principal. For proof whereof consider, I pray you, the multitude of all sorts of people upon the earth, and see what their traffick is; see whether they treat this affair, or no: see wherein their care, and study, and thoughts consist: how many thousands find you in christendom, who spend not one hour of twenty, nor one half day of forty, in the service of God, or business of their soul? how many are there who break their brains about worldly commodities; and how few that are touch'd with these other thoughts? how many find time to eat, drink, sleep, sport, deck and trim themselves to the view of others; and yet have no time to bestow in this greatest business of all other business? how many pass over whole days, weeks, months, and years, and finally their whole lives in hawking, hunting, and other pastimes, without regard to this important affair? how many miserable women have you in the world, that spend more days in one year in making up their apparel, and adorning themselves, than they do hours in prayer, for the space of all their life? and what alas, will become of this people in the end? what will they do, or say at the day of account? what excuse will they allege? what way will they turn themselves? how will they admire their own folly?

The wrong course of the world.

If the merchant's factor which I mention'd before, after many years spent in foreign countries upon his master's expences, should return at length, and give up his accounts of so much time, and money spent in singing; so much in dancing; so much in courting: who would not laugh at so foolish a reckoning? but being farther demanded of his master, what time he had bestow'd upon his merchandise, and affairs for which he was sent: if the man should answer, that he had not leisure to think upon that thing, because of the great occupation which he had in the other: who would not esteem him worthy of punishment and confusion? and much more shame and confusion, no doubt, will they

A comparison expressing the vanity of our occupations.

Mat. 16.

sustain, at the last dreadful day, in the face and presence of God, and all his Angels, who, being sent into this world to traffick so rich a merchandise, as is the kingdom of heaven, have neglected the same, and have bestow'd their studies upon the most vain trifles and follies of this world, without thought or care of the other.

Psalm 4.

Hier. 22.

A comparison.

2 Cor. 9.

Sap. 5.

The complaint of worldlings in the end of their life.

The foolish judgment of the world.

O ye children of *Adam*, says the spirit of God, why love you vanity and seek after lies? why leave you the fountain, and seek after cisterns; if a golden prize of inestimable value, should be proposed to such as would run, and win the same; and when the course or race was begun, if some should step aside and follow flies or feathers, that passed in the air, without regard to the prize proposed: who would not marvel and take pity of their folly? even so is it with men of this world, if we believe *St. Paul*, who affirms: That we are all placed together in a course or race, and that heaven is propounded unto us for the prize: but every man, says he, arrives not thither; and why? for that most men do step aside and leave the mark. Most men do run awry, and do follow feathers up and down in the air: most men do pursue vanities, and do weary themselves out in the pursuit thereof, until they can neither run, nor go, nor move their limbs any further; and then, for the most part, it is too late to amend their folly. Will you hear the lamentations of such unfortunate men? these are their own words recorded by Scripture. *We are wearied in the way of iniquity and perdition; and have walked hard ways; but the way of the Lord we have not known: what hath pride profited us? or what commodity hath the vaunting of riches brought to us? all those things have passed away as a shadow, and as a messenger running before.*

This is the lamentable complaint at length of such as run awry, and follow'd a wrong course in their actions of this life. These are they, who pursued riches, honours, pomp, and the like vanities; and forgot the business for

for which they were sent. These are they, who were esteem'd happy men in this world, and thought to run a most fortunate course, in that they heap'd much riches together, advanced themselves and their families to great dignities, became great and glorious, and dreadful to others, and finally obtain'd whatsoever their lust and concupiscence desired. This made them seem blessed in the eyes of the world, and the way wherein they ran, to be most prosperous and happy. And I make no doubt, by experience of these our times, but they had admirers and enviers in great abundance, who burnt in desire to obtain the same course. And yet when I hear their complaint in this place, and their own confession, wherein they say expressly: *We senseless men did err from the way of truth*: *Sap. 5.* when I consider also the addition of Scripture: *Talia dixerunt in inferno*, they spoke those things when they were in hell: I cannot but esteem their course most miserable, and condemn wholly the judgment of flesh in this affair.

Wherefore, my brother, if you be wise, yield not to this deceit of worldly lips and tongues, that use to bless and sanctify such, as are in most danger, and nearest to perdition. Lean rather to the sincere counsel of *St. Paul*, who would have thee to examine uprightly thy own works and ways, and so to judge of thy self without deceit. If thou walk the way of *Babylon*, most certain it is, that thou shalt never arrive at the gates of *Jerusalem*, except thou change thy course. Oh, my brother! what a grief will it be unto thee, when after long labour and much toil, thou shalt find thy self to have gone awry? if a man had travell'd but one whole day, and thereby made weary, should understand at night, that all his labour was lost, and that his whole journey was out of the way; it would be a marvellous affliction unto him, no doubt, altho' no other inconvenience were therein, but only the loss of that day's travelling, which yet might be recover'd and recompenced in

Psal. 10.
Gal. 6.
A comparison expressing our grief in the end, for our running a wrong course.

the next. But if, besides this, his business was great; if his life depended on his being at a certain hour, at the place whither he goes: if the loss of his way were irrecoverable; if the punishment of his error must be death and confusion, and himself were so weary, that he could stir not one foot further: imagine then, what a grievous message this would be unto him, to hear one say: Sir, you have run amiss, and have ridden wholly out of your way?

The misery of a soul that has gone awry at the last day.
Sap. 5.

So then will it be unto thee, my soul, at the day of death and separation from my body, if in this life thou attend not to thy salvation, for which thou were created; but hast pass'd over thy days in following vanities. Thou shalt find thy self astray, at the end of thy journey; thou shalt find thy self weary and forced to say with those miserable damned spirits: *I have walked hard and craggy ways* to no purpose; for indeed the way of wickedness is full of thorns, and stones, tho' in shew it be cover'd with fair grass, and many flowers. Thou shalt find at that day, that thou hast lost thy labour, lost thy time, lost all opportunity of thy own commodity. Thou shalt find thy error to be irrecoverable, thy danger unavoidable, thy punishment insupportable, and thy grief and sorrow, and calamity inconsolable.

S E C T. II.

Concerning the same argument by some examples.

IF any one could behold, and feel the inward thoughts of a worldly man's heart, at that last instant, when all his honours and pleasures are past; no doubt, but he would find him of another judgment and opinion in things, than he was in the height and heat of his prosperity. He does well perceive then, the fondness of those trifles, which he follow'd in this life; tho' it were to make himself a monarch. If a man did know the thoughts,

thoughts that *Alexander the Great* had, when by poison he came to die, after all his victories, and incredible prosperity: if we knew the thoughts of *Julius Cæsar* at the day of his murther in the senate-house; after the conquest of all his enemies, and subjecting the whole world to his own only obedience: we should well perceive, that they took little pleasure in the ways they had walked, notwithstanding they were esteem'd most prosperous and happy, by men of this world, whilst they flourish'd and follow'd their own vain courses of ambition, and oppression of others.

Alexander's death.
Julius Cæsar's death.

Josephus the Jew recounts two very rare examples of human felicity, in two of his countrymen, to wit, *Herod* the first, and *Agrippa* his nephew, who being but private gentlemen, and in great poverty and misery when they fled to *Rome*, were exalted upon the sudden, the one by *Antony* the *Triumvir*, and the other by *Caligula* the emperor, to unexpected great fortunes, and made rich monarchs, and glorious potentates. They were endued, at several times, with the kingdom and crown of *Jury*, and that in such ample sort, as never any of that nation after them had the like: for which cause, they are call'd in the *Hebrew* history, for distinction's sake, *Herod the Great*, and *Agrippa the Great*. They ruled and commanded all in their days; they wanted neither silver, nor gold, nor pleasures, nor pastimes, nor friends, nor flatterers. And besides all these gifts of fortune, they abounded also in ornaments, and excellency of body and wit. And all this was increased and made the more admirable by reason of their base and low estate before, in respect whereof their present fortune was esteem'd for a perfect pattern of most absolute felicity.

Two rare examples.
Joseph. l. 14, 15, & 18. de antiq. Jud. & de Bel. Jud. l. 2.

This they enjoy'd for a certain space; and to assure themselves of the continuance, they bent all their cares, thoughts, and studies, to please the humours of the *Roman* emperors, as their gods, and authors of all their prosperity and felicity upon earth. In respect of

whose favours, as *Josephus* notes, they cared little to violate their own religion of the *Jews*; or any thing else, that was most sacred. And this was esteem'd by many, a most wise, politick, prosperous, and happy course. But what was the end and consummation of this their race?

First, *Herod* fell sick of such an incurable, and loathsome disease; and was tormented in the same with so

* This *Herod* was called *Ascaonita*, and slew the infants in *Bethlem*. *Mat. 2.* The death of *Agrippa*. *Joseph. 1.* 19. cap. 7. many terrours, and horrible * accusations of his conscience, that he pronounced himself to be the most miserable afflicted creature that ever lived: and so calling one day for a knife to pare an apple, would needs have murder'd himself with the same, if his arm had not been stop'd by them that stood by. And for *Agrippa*, *Josephus* reports, how that, upon a certain day which he kept festival in *Cæsarea*, for the honour of *Claudius* the Roman emperor; when he was in his most extreme pomp and glory, in the midst of all his peers and courtiers, coming forth at an hour appointed, all glittering with gold and silver, to make an oration unto the people; his voice, gesture, countenance and apparel so pleased, that the people began to cry, being solicited thereunto by some flatterers, *That it was the voice of God, and not of man*: wherein *Agrippa* taking pleasure and delectation,

* *St. Luke* said he was stricken by God's Angel, *Act. 12* And consider how *Josephus* agrees with that narration. *Euseb. 1. 2. hist.* 6. 9. was * struck presently from heaven, with a most horrible putrefaction of all his body, whereof he died; repeating only to his friends these words in the midst of his torments: *Behold ye me, that do seem to you a god, how miserably I am forced to depart from you all.*

Now then would I demand of these two so fortunate men, who laying aside all care of God and religion, did follow the preferments of this world so earnestly, and obtain'd the same so luckily, how they liked this their course and race in the end. Truly, I doubt not, but if they were here to answer for themselves, they would assure us, that one hour rightly bestow'd in the service of God, and of their salvation, would have comforted them more, at that last instant, than all their labours and

and toils, which they took in their lives, to please their emperors, and gain the favour and good-will of mortal men. I would ask of that famous *Antiochus*, surnamed *Illustrious*, after all his wars, toils, turmoils, and devastation both of *Ægypt*, *Syria*, and *Jerusalem*, what sentiments he was in concerning his former courses, when calling all his friends a little before his death, he used that exclamation which the Scripture recounts : *In Macha. l. 2. : quantam tribulationem deveni, & in quos fluctus tristitiæ !* cap. 6.
 Into how great tribulations am I come, into what floods of sorrow am I fallen !

Use then, O Christian, use this experience to thy advantage ; use it to thy instruction ; use it to thy fore-warning. That which they are now, thou shalt be shortly : and of all follies it is the greatest, not to profit, or fly dangers by the example of others. The difference between a wise man and a fool is ; that the one provides for a mischief while time serves ; and the other would do it when it is too late. If thou mightst feel now the state and case, wherein thy poor heart will be at the last day, for neglecting the thing, that of all others it should have studied, and thought upon most, thou wouldst take from thy meat, and sleep, and other necessities to repair what is past. Now thou hast time to reform thy course, if thou please ; which is no small benefit, if all were known : for in this sense, no doubt, what the wise man says is most true, *That better it is to be a living dog, than a dead lion.* *Ecc. 19.* For, while the day-time of this life endures, all things amiss may easily be amended. But the dreadful *night* of death will overtake thee shortly ; and then shall there be no more space of reformation.

Oh that they were wise and understood, and would provide for their last ! says another Prophet. The greatest wisdom in the world, dear brother, is to look, and attend to our own salvation. For as the Scripture says most truly ; *There is a wise man, wise to his own soul.* *Ecc. 37.* And of this wisdom it is written in the very same book, as

Ecclef. 24. spoken by herself. *In me is all grace of way, and truth; in me all hope of life, and virtue.* In moral actions, and human wisdom, we see that the first and chiefest circumstance is to regard well, and consider the end. And how then do we omit the same, in this great affair of the kingdom of heaven? if our end is heaven, what mean we so much to affect ourselves to earth? if our end is God, why seek we so greedily the worldly favour of men? if our end is the salvation and eternity of our soul, why do we follow vanities and temporalities of this life? *Isaiah 55.* *Why bestow you silver not for bread? says God by Isaiah: and your labour not for satiety. Hearing hear ye me --- and your soul shall be delighted.* If our inheritance is, that we should reign as kings, why put we our selves in such slavery of creatures? if our birth allows us to feed on bread in our father's house, why delight we in husks provided for the swine?

But, alas! we may say with the wise man in Scripture. *Fascinatio nugacitatis obscurat bona.* The bewitching of worldly trifles does obscure and hide from us the things that are good and profitable to our souls. O most dangerous enchantment! but what? shall this excuse us? no truly; for the same spirit of God has left recorded, *Populus non intelligens vapulabit.* The people that understands not shall be beaten for it. And another Prophet to the same effect pronounces: this people is not wise, and therefore he, that made them, shall not pardon them; neither shall he, that created them, take mercy upon them. *Isaiah 27.* It is written of fools; *Ventum seminabunt, & turbinem metent.* They shall sow and cast their seed upon the winds, and shall receive for their harvest nothing else but a storm of tempest. Whereby is signified, that they shall not only cast away, and lose their labours; but also be punish'd, and chastised for the same.

Hosea 8. Consider then I beseech thee, dear brother, attentively, what thou wilt do or say, when thy Lord will come at the last day, and ask thee an account of all thy labours, actions, and time spent in this life? when he

Great folly
and error.

Sap. 4.

Error in
our course
of life is
not par-
don'd.

Hosea 4.

Hosea 8.
A profit-
able fore-
warning.

he will require a reckoning of the talents given thee? when he will say, as he said to the farmer or steward in the Gospel: *Redde rationem villicationis tue*: Give an account of thy stewardship and charge committed unto thee? what wilt thou say when he will examine, and weigh, and try thy doings; as gold is examin'd and tried in the furnace? that is, what end they had? whereto they were applied? to what glory of God? to what profit of thy soul? what measure and weight, and substance they bear? *Baltazar* king of *Babylon*, sitting at his banquet merry, upon a time, espied suddenly certain fingers without a hand, that wrote in the wall over-right against his table, these three *Hebrew* words, *Mane, Thekel, Phares*. Which three words *Daniel* interpreted in three sentences to *Baltazar* in this manner: *Mane*, God has number'd thee (*Baltazar*) and thy kingdom: *Thekel*, he has weighed thee in the goldsmiths balance, and thou art found too light: *Phares*, for this cause he has divided thee from thy kingdom, and has given the same to the *Medes* and *Persians*.

Mat. 25.
Luke 16.

A wonderful adventure that happen'd to *Baltazar* king of *Babylon*.
Dan. 5.

O that these three golden and most significant words, engraved by the Angel upon *Baltazar's* wall, were register'd upon every door and post in *Christendom*; or rather imprinted in the heart of each *Christian*; especially the two first, that import the numbering and weighing of all our actions; and that in the weights and balance of the goldsmith, where every grain is espied that is wanting. And if *Baltazar's* actions, that was a *Gentile*, were to be examin'd in so nice and delicate a balance for their trial; and if he had so severe a sentence pronounced upon him, that he should be divided from life and kingdom, as he was the same night: for that he was found to have less weight in him than he should have; what shall we think of ourselves, that are *Christians*, of whom it is written above all others; *I will search Jerusalem with lamps*? what shall we expect, who have not only less weight, than we should have, but no weight at all, in most of our actions? what may such men,

If God examines strictly the actions of *Infidels*, much more of *Christians*, if they are careless.

Dan. 5.

Sopho. 14.

A dreadful
division.

men, I say, expect, but only that most terrible threat of division and cutting off, denounced to *Baltazar*, or rather worse, if worse may be, that is, to be divided from God, and his Angels; from participation with our Saviour; from communion of Saints; from hope of our inheritance; from our portion celestial, and life everlasting, according to the express declaration made hereof by Christ himself in these words to the negligent servant: *The Lord of that servant shall come in a day, that he hopes not; and at an hour, that he knows not; and shall divide him, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Mat. 24.

The con-
clusion.

Rom. 12.

Wherefore, dear brother, to conclude this chapter, I can say nothing more in this dangerous case, wherein the world so runs astray, but only exhort thee, as the Apostle does, not to conform thy self to the common error of worldly men, that leads to perdition. Fall at length to some reckoning and account with thy life; and see where thou standest, and whither thou goest. If hitherto thou hast wander'd and gone astray, be sorry for the time lost; but pass no further. If hitherto thou hast not consider'd the weightiness of this affair, make use of this admonition; and remember that it is written:

Prov. 9.

A wise man profits by every occasion. Esteem thy resolution in this one point, the chief work that ever will pass thro' thy hands in this world, altho' thou wert a monarch and ruler of ten thousand worlds together. And finally; I will end with the very same words, wherewith the wise

Eccles. 12.

man concludes his whole book. *Deum time, & mandata ejus observa; hoc est enim omnis homo.* Fear God, and observe his commandments; for this is every man. As if he had said; in this does all and every man consist: his end, his beginning, his life, and cause of being, that he fear God, and direct his actions to the observance of his commandments; for without this, he is no man in effect, seeing he loses all benefit, both of his name, nature, redemption, and creation.

C H A P. IV.

That the service, which God requires of Man in this present life, is religion: with the particular confirmation of christian religion, above all others in the world.

SECT. I. *Of religion in general, and the purport of this chapter.*

HAVING proved in the former chapters, that there is a God, who created man; and that man in respect hereof, and of other benefits received, is bound to honour and serve the same God: the question may be made in this place, what service this is that God requires, and wherein it does consist? whereunto the answer is brief, that it is religion; which is a virtue, that contains properly, the worship and service that we owe unto God: even as piety is a virtue, containing the duty, that children owe unto their parents: and observance another virtue, that comprehends the regard, that scholars, and servants bear unto their masters. In respect of which comparison and likeness between these virtues, God says by a certain Prophet. *The son honoureth his father, and the servant his lord: If then I be the father, where is my honour? if I be the lord, where is my fear?*

Of religion, see St. Thom. 2.2. quest. 81, 82, 83.

Mal. 1.

The acts of religion are divers and different; some internal, as devotion and prayer; some others external, as adoration, worship, sacrifice, oblations, vows, and such like, that are declarations and protestations of the internal. It extends itself also, to stir up and put in use the acts and operations of other virtues, for the service of God: in which sense St. James says, *Religion clean and unspotted, with God and the Father, is this, to visit pupils and widows in their tribulation: and to keep himself unspotted from this world.* Finally, howsoever some

The acts and operations of religion.

James 1.

heathens

*Aug. l. 10.
de civ. c. 1.*

How much
it import-
eth to be
religious.

heathens did use this word religion to some other significations, yet, as *St. Augustine* well notes, the use thereof among the faithful, has always been, to signify thereby the worship, honour, and service that is due unto God : so that if in one word you will have it declared, what God requires of man in this life ; it may be rightly said, that all stands in this, that he be religious.

The neces-
sity of
christian
religion.
Acts 4.

From hence proceeded, that whatsoever sort or sect of people of the world, profess'd reverence, honour, or worship to God, or to gods, or to any divine power, essence, or nature whatsoever ; (were they *Jews, Heathens, Gentiles, Christians, Turks, Moors, Hereticks*, or others, they did always call their said profession by the name of their religion. In which sense also and signification of the word, I am to treat at this time of christian religion, that is, of the substance, form, manner, and way reveal'd by Christ and his Apostles unto us, of performing our duty and true service towards God. Which service is the first point necessary to be resolved upon, by him that seeks his salvation, as in the foregoing chapter, has been declared. And for obtaining this service, and true knowledge thereof, no way upon earth is left unto man, but only by the light and instruction of christian religion, according to the protestation of *St. Peter* to the governours of the *Jews*, when he said : There is no other name under heaven given unto men whereby to be saved, but only this of Christ, and of his religion.

How men
were saved
in old times
without
christian
religion.

If you object against me, that in former times before Christ's nativity, as under the law of *Moses* for two thousand years together, there were many Saints that without christian religion served God uprightly, as the Prophets and other holy people ; and before them again in the law of nature, when neither Christian nor *Jewish* religion was yet heard of, for more than two thousand years, there wanted not divers that pleased God and served him truly, as *Enoch, Noab, Job, Abraham, Jacob*, and others : I answer, that altho' these men (especially the former, that lived under the law of nature)

nature) had not so particular and express knowledge of Christ and his mysteries, as we have now; for this was reserved to the time of grace, as *St. Paul* in divers places at large declares, that is, tho' they knew not expressly, how and in what manner Christ was to be born, whether of a virgin, or no; or in what particular sort he would live and die; what sacraments he would leave; what way of publishing his Gospel he would appoint, and the like: whereof notwithstanding very many particulars were revealed to the *Jews*, from time to time; and the nearer they drew to the time of Christ's appearance, the more plain revelation was made of these mysteries: yet, I say, all and every one of these holy Saints, that lived from *Adam* until the coming of Christ, had knowledge in general of christian religion, and did believe the same: that is, they believed expressly, that there would come a Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, to deliver them from the bondage contracted by the sin of *Adam*.

Gal. 3. & 4.
Ephes. 3.
Col. 1.
See St. Aug.
l. 19. cont.
Fausst. c. 14.

All old Saints believed in Christ and were saved by him.

This was reveal'd, immediately after their fall, to our first parents, and progenitors in paradise, to wit, that by the *woman's seed*, our redemption should be made. In respect whereof it is said in the *Revelations*, that Christ is the Lamb, that has been slain from the beginning of the world. And as *St. Peter* in the first general council holden by the Apostles, affirms, that the old ancient fathers before Christ's nativity, were saved by the grace of Christ, as we are now; which *St. Paul* confirms in divers places. And finally, the matter is so clear in this behalf, that the whole school of divines agree, that the faith and religion of the old fathers before Christ's appearance, was the very same in substance that ours is now; saving only, that it was more general, obscure, and confuse, than ours is; for that it was of things to come, as ours is now of things past, and present.

For example, they believed a Redeemer to come; and we believe that he is already come. They said *Virgo concipiet*, A virgin shall conceive; and we say, *Virgo concepit*,

The differences between our belief and the old fathers.

Isaiah 7.
Gen. 49.

concepit, A virgin has conceived. They had sacrifices and ceremonies that prefigured his coming for the time ensuing; we have sacrifice and sacraments that represent his being for the time present. They call'd their Redeemer, *The expectation of nations*: and we call him now, The salvation of nations. And finally, there was no other difference between the old faith of good men from the beginning, and ours; but only in the circumstance of time, clearness, particularity, and the manner of protesting the same by outward signs and ceremonies. For in substance they believed the same Redeemer, that we do; and were saved by the same belief in his merits, as we are. For which cause * *Eusebius* well notes, that as we are call'd now *Christians*; so they were then call'd *Christi*, that is anointed in prefiguration of the true Christ, in whom they believed, as the first and head of all others anointed; and who was the cause and author of their anointing.

* *Eusebius*
handles
this matter
at large.
I. 1. demon.
evan. c. 5.

By this then it is most manifest, that, not only now to us that are *Christians*, but at all other times from the beginning of the world, and to all other persons and people whatsoever, that desired to save their souls, it was necessary to believe and love Christ, and to profess in heart his religion. For which consideration, I thought it not amiss in this place, after the former grounds laid, to wit, that there is a God, and that man was created and placed here for his service, to demonstrate and prove also this other principle, that the only service of this God, is by christian religion. Wherein tho' I do not doubt, but that I shall seem to many, to take upon me a superfluous labour, in proving a verity, which all men in *Christendom* do confess: yet for the causes before alleged in the second chapter, which moved me in that place to prove, there is a God: that is to say, first, for the comfort, strength, and confirmation of such, as either from the enemy may receive temptations; or of themselves may desire to see a reason of their belief; and secondly, for awakening, stirring up,

The causes
of this
chapter.

or

or convincing of others, who either out of malice, carelessness, or sensuality, are fallen into a slumber, and have lost the feeling and sense of their belief (for many such are not wanting in these our miserable days) it will not be, perhaps, from our purpose, to lay together in this place, with the greatest brevity that possibly may be, the most sure grounds and invincible evidences, which we have for declaration and confirmation of this matter.

For notwithstanding, as the Apostle *St. Paul* declares, *Heb. 11.* the things which we believe, are not such in themselves, as may be made apparent by reason or human argument; for our faith, that is, the assent of our judgment to the things propounded by God unto us, must be voluntary, to the end it may be meritorious: yet, such is the goodness and most sweet proceedings of our merciful God towards us, that he will not leave himself without sufficient testimony both inward and outward, as the same Apostle in another place does testify: because that inwardly he testifies the truth of such things as we believe, by giving us light and understanding, with internal joy and consolation in believing them. And outwardly, he gives testimony to the same, with so many conveniencies, probabilities, and *arguments of credibility*, as divines do call them; that altho' the very point of that, which is believed, remains still with some obscurity, to the end there may be place for our will and merit; yet are there so many circumstances of likelihood, to induce a man to the belief thereof; that in all reason it may seem against reason to deny or mistrust them.

Acts 14.
The divers testimonies from God of the things that we believe.

This will easily appear by the following treatise of Christ and christianity, and of the foundation of our religion; which shall be confirm'd by so many pregnant reasons, and most manifest circumstances of evident probability; that I doubt not but the zealous *Christian* will take exceeding comfort therein, and esteem himself happy, to have a lot in that faith and religion,

religion, where he will see, and feel so much reason, proof, and conveniency to concur and shew it self, for his satisfaction.

And to this effect, it will be of no small moment, that I have proved before, the certainty, divinity, and infallible truth of the *Jews* Scriptures or Old Testament; which writings we have received from that nation, that does as it were, profess enmity against us; and the same being written so many ages before the name of *Christianity* was known in the world, whatsoever will be alleged out of those records for our purpose, cannot but be of singular authority. And therefore, as before, in proving our first principle, *That there is a God*, we used only the testimony of such witnesses, as could not be partial: so much more in this confirmation of christian religion, we will only stand, either upon the confessions of such as are our enemies; or upon the records of others, who must needs be indifferent in the cause; because they lived before either cause, or controversy in *Christianity* was known or call'd in question.

The undoubted witnesses to be alleged in this chapter.

The drift of this chapter.

The principal heads.

My whole purpose shall be then to make manifest in this chapter, that Jesus Christ was the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, fore-promised and expected from the beginning of the world; that he was the Son of God, and God himself: and consequently, that whatsoever he has left us in his doctrine and religion, is true and sincere, and the only way of salvation upon earth. For clearer proof and declaration whereof, I will reduce whatsoever I have to say herein, unto three principal heads or branches, according to the order of three distinct times wherein they fell out: that is to say, in the first place shall be consider'd, the things that pass'd before the nativity or incarnation of Christ. In the second, the things done and verified from that time unto his ascension; which is the space of his abode upon earth. And in the third place, such events shall be consider'd, as ensued for confirmation of his deity after his departure.

In proving of which three general points, I hope by the assistance of him, whose cause we handle, that so many clear demonstrations will be discover'd, as will greatly confirm thy faith, gentle reader, and remove all occasions of temptations to infidelity.

S E C T. II.

How Christ was foretold to Jew and Gentile.

FIRST then, for such things as pass'd before Christ appear'd in flesh, and do make for proof of our christian religion, is to be noted, that they are of two sorts, or at least, they are to be taken from two kind of people; that is, partly from the *Jews*, and partly from the *Gentiles*. For seeing that he was appointed from the beginning, and before the world was created, as *St. Paul* affirms, to work the redemption both of *Jew* and *Gentile*, and to make them both one people in the service of his Father; hence it is, that he was foretold and presignified to both these nations, and divers forewarnings were left among them both, to stir them up to expect his coming, as by the considerations following will most evidently appear.

And to begin with *Jews*, no man can deny, but that throughout the whole body and course of their Scriptures, that is, from the very beginning, to the last ending of their Old Testament, they had promised to them a **M E S S I A S**, which is the same thing that we call **C H R I S T**; that is to say, a person anointed and sent from God to be a Saviour, a Redeemer, a pacifier of God's wrath, a mediator between God and man, a satisfier for the sins and offences of the world, a restorer of our innocency lost in paradise, a master and instructor, a law-giver, and finally, a spiritual and eternal king, that should sit and rule, and reign in our hearts, to conquer the power and tyranny of satan, that overcame our first parents, and assails us daily.

*Ephes. 1.
1 Tim. 2.
Tit. 1.
1 Pet. 1.
Isa. 2. 16.
Jer. 9. 12.
16.*

The first consideration.

The Messiahias promised.

I. The first
covenant
to Adam.
Gen. 2.

This is evident by the first covenant of all, that ever God did make with man, when he said to *Adam* our first father in paradise; *In what day soever thou shalt eat of the tree, that is forbidden, thou shalt die.* Which covenant being after broken on the part of our said progenitor, he received his judgment; but yet with a most benign promise of redemption for the time to come: for thus God said to the devil or serpent, that had deceived him: *I will put enmities between --- thy seed, and the seed of her: she shall bruise thy head in pieces.* That is, one shall proceed in time, of the seed of the woman, who shall conquer death and sin, that are thy weapons, and shall not care for thy temptations, but shall tread them under his feet; and this shall be Christ the Messias of the world. Thus did not only the * eldest *Jews* and *Rabbins* understand this place (howsoever the later dream'd that their Messias would be only a temporal king) but also the old *Chaldee* paraphrase, named *Thargum Hierosolymitanum*, expounds it plainly in these words, applied unto the devil that had deceived *Adam*.

Gen. 3.

* Rabbi
Moses Ben-
maimon in
hunc locum.

Thar. Hier

11.
Gen. 3.

They have a certain and present remedy against thee (O devil) for the time shall come, when they shall tread thee down with their heels, by the help of Messias who shall be their king.

II. To A-
bram
and *Isaac*.
Gen. 12. &
18, & 22.

The same is confirm'd, by the very same promise seven times repeated and establish'd unto *Abraham*, that lived very near two thousand years after *Adam*; and again to *Isaac* his son after him: *In semine tuo benedicentur omnes gentes terræ.* All nations of the earth shall be blessed in thy seed. Which had been indeed but a very small benediction to *Abraham*, or to other *Jews* after him, that never saw this Messias actually, if he had been only to be a temporal king: and much less blessing had it been to *Gentiles* and other nations, if this Messias of the *Jews* must have been a temporal and worldly monarch, to destroy and subdue them under the servitude of *Jury*, as vainly these later teachers of that nation do contend.

This

This the patriarch *Jacob* makes yet more plain, who prophesying at his death of the coming of Christ, has these words: *The scepter, or government, shall not be taken away from Judah, ----- till he come that is to be sent, and the same shall be the expectation of the Gentiles.* Which latter words, the fore-named *Chaldee* paraphrase, as also great *Onkelos* (both of singular authority amongst the *Jews*) do interpret thus: *Donec Christus seu Messias veniat, &c.* Until Christ or the Messias comes, who is the hope and expectation of all nations, as well *Gentiles*, as of us that are *Jews*, the government shall not cease in the house or tribe of *Judah*. By which sentence of Scripture, and interpretation of the *Jews* themselves, we come to learn, besides the promise for the Messias, two consequences in this matter, against the *Jews* of later time. First, that if their Messias must be the hope and expectation as well of *Gentiles* as of *Jews*; then can he not be a temporal king to destroy the *Gentiles*, as the later *Jews* would have it, but a spiritual king to reign over them, and to bring in subjection their spiritual enemies for them, I mean the flesh, world, and devil, as we Christians do believe. Secondly, if the temporal kingdom of the house of *Judah*, whereof Christ must come, will cease and be destroy'd at the coming of Messias, as the Scripture avouches, how then can the *Jews* expect a temporal king for their Messias, as most vainly they do?

But to leave this controversy with the later Rabbins, and go forward in the declaration of that, which we took in hand, that is, to shew how Christ was foretold and forepromised to the *Jews*; it is to be noted, that after the death of *Jacob* last mention'd, there is little recorded in Scripture of the doings of his people, during the four hundred years of their bondage in *Ægypt*. Yet the tradition of that nation teaches, that as soon as they were deliver'd out of *Ægypt*, and were in the desert towards the land of promise, the three sons of *Chore*, call'd *Aser*, *Aleana*, and *Abiasaph*, of whom there is

III. *Jacob's* prophecy of Christ.
Gen. 49.
Thar. Har.
& *Onkelos*
in hunc locum.

The Messias must be a spiritual and not a temporal king.

The tradition of the *Jews* in *Mishnah* *Thablim*

See the title of these
Psalms 41,
 44, 45, 46,
 47, 48, 82,
 84, 86, 87.
 V. *Moses's*
 prophecy
 of Christ.
Deut. 18.

mention in the sixth chapter of *Exodus*, and elsewhere, made divers songs and psalms in the praise and expectation of the Messias to come: and that the holy men of that time did solace themselves with singing the same; and king *David* afterwards in the second part of his *Psalms*, beginning from the forty first unto the eighty seventh, gather'd the most part of those old songs together, as yet may be seen in his psalter.

But *Moses*, who lived with that people, and govern'd them in the wilderness, had a clear revelation from God of this Messias in these words. *A prophet I will raise up to them out of the midst of their brethren, like to thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all things, that I shall command him: but he that will not hear his words which he shall speak in my name, I will be the revenger.* Which words that they cannot be understood of any other prophet that ever lived after *Moses* among the *Jews*, but only of Christ, it appears plainly by this testimony of the Holy Ghost: *And there arose not any other Prophet in Israel, like unto Moses, &c.*

Deut. 34.

VI. *David's* prophecies of Christ.

After *Moses*, about four hundred years, lived king *David*; who as he was a holy man, and the first king of *Judah*, out of whose lineage the Messias was to come; the particulars of this mystery, were more abundantly reveal'd unto him, than unto any other. And first, for assurance that Christ should be born of his stock and lineage, these are the words of God unto him: *I have sworn to David my servant; for ever will I prepare thy seed; and I will build thy seat unto generation and generation.* Which words, tho' the later *Jews* will apply to king *Solomon*, that was *David's* son (and in some sense they may be so, for that *Solomon* was a figure of Christ to come) yet properly these words: *And his kingdom shall stand for ever, and for all eternity;* which are so often repeated in this, and other places of Scripture, cannot be verified in *Solomon*, whose earthly kingdom was rent and torn in pieces directly after his death by *Jeroboam*; and

Psal. 88.

2 *Reg.* 7.

1 *Para.* 22.

2 *Reg.* 5.

1 *Para.* 22.

and not long after, as it were extinguish'd: but they must needs be understood of an eternal king, which should come of *David's* seed: as must also these other words of God in the *Psalms*: *Thou art my son, I this day have begotten thee: ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles, for thine inheritance.* Which was never fulfill'd in *Solomon*, nor in any temporal king of *Jury* after him. And much less these words that follow: *He shall continue with the Sun and before the Moon, in generation and generation --- There shall rise in his days justice, and abundance of peace, until the Moon be taken away: and he shall rule from sea to sea: --- all kings of the earth shall adore him; and all nations shall serve him: because he shall deliver the poor from the mighty --- from usuries and iniquity, he shall redeem their souls --- all tribes of the earth shall be blessed in him; all nations shall magnify him.*

Psalms 2.

Psalms 71.

These words of Christ's eternal kingdom; of his enduring to the world's end; of his universal reign over *Jew* and *Gentile*; of his being adored by all nations; of his delivering of souls from the bondage of iniquity; and finally of his making blessed all tribes of the earth, cannot possibly be applied to any temporal king, that ever was among the *Jews*, or ever will be; but only to Christ.

This promise made unto *David*, that Christ should come of his seed, is repeated after his death by many Prophets, and confirm'd by God; as in *Jeremiah*, where God uses these words: *Behold the days come, says our Lord, and I will raise up to David a just branch, and he shall reign a king: and shall be wise; and he shall do judgment, and justice in the earth. In those days shall Judah be saved; and Israel shall dwell confidently; and this is the name that they shall call him: THE LORD OUR JUST.* All this was spoken of *David's* seed, above four hundred years after *David* was dead: which proves manifestly, that the former promises and speeches, were not made to *David* for *Solomon*, or for any other temporal king of *David's* line; but for Christ, who

VII. *Jeremiah's prophecy touching Christ.*
Jerc. 23.

was call'd so peculiarly, The son and seed of *David*; for that *David* was the first king of the tribe of *Judah*; and not only was Christ's progenitor in flesh; but also did bear his type and figure in many other things.

VIII. *Ezekiel's* prophecy of Christ.
Ezek. 34.

Christ is call'd *David*.
Thalm. tract. Sanh cathelec.

For which cause likewise in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, who lived about the same time that *Jeremiah* did, the Messias is call'd by the name of *David* himself. For thus God spoke at that time unto *Ezekiel*: *I will save my flock; and it shall be no more into spoil --- I will raise up over them ONE PASTOR, who shall feed them, my servant DAVID, he shall feed them; and he shall be their Master; and I the Lord will be their God --- and I will make a covenant of peace with them, &c.* In which words, not only we, that are Christians; but the later *Jews* themselves also do confess in their *Thalmud*, Messias is call'd by the name of *David*, for that he was to descend of the seed of *David*: and by reason also it must needs be so; for king *David*, being dead four hundred years before these words were spoken, as has been noted, could not now come again, to feed God's people, or govern them himself.

IX. The prophecies of *Isaiah* touching Christ.
Isaiah 2.

Micb. 4.

Isaiah 4.

Isaiah the Prophet, who lived about a hundred years before *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*, had marvelous fore-knowledge of the Messias and his affairs, and describes him very particularly, beginning in this manner. *In the later days, the mountain of the house of our Lord shall be prepared in the top of mountains; --- and all nations shall flow unto it: and many people shall go, and shall say; come and let us go up to the mount of our Lord --- and he will teach us his ways, and we shall walk in his paths; --- he shall judge the Gentiles, &c.* Which very words are repeated in *Micbeas* the Prophet, and are applied there, as also here, unto the Messias, and can have no other meaning, by the judgment of the *Jews* and *Hebrews* themselves. And *Isaiah* does pursue the same matter afterwards in divers chapters: as for example, in the fourth, talking of the same Messias, which before he calls the MOUNTAIN of God's house; he adds these words:

In

In that day, the bud of our Lord shall be in magnificence, and glory; and the fruit of the earth, high and exultation to them that shall be saved of Israel. In which words he calls the Messias, both the issue of God, and the fruit of the earth; because he should be both God and man. And in the ninth chapter he calls him by these terms: Marvelous counsellor, God, strong, father of the world to come, the prince of peace.

In the eleventh chapter he describes him most wonderfully in these words, *A rod shall come forth of the stock of Jesse (which Jesse was David's father) and a flower shall rise up out of his root; and the spirit of our Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom, and understanding; the spirit of counsel, and strength; the spirit of knowledge and piety; ---- he shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor rebuke according to the hearing of the ears; but he shall judge the poor in justice; and shall rebuke in equity for the mild of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the spirit of his lips he shall kill the impious. --- And justice shall be the girdle of his loins; and faith the girdle of his reins, &c.* Hitherto are the words of the Prophet, wherein nothing truly can be more plain and evident, than that by the *rod or branch of Jesse*, is meant the virgin *Mary*, who directly descended of the lineage of *Jesse*: and by the *flower ascending from this branch*, must needs be understood Christ, who was born of her, and had all those excellencies and privileges above other men, which *Isaiab* in this place assigns unto him.

Isaiab 11.

Wonderful
properties
of Christ.

*Mat 1.
Luke 3.
Acts 13.
Rom. 15.*

Whose further graces yet, and special divine properties, the same Prophet expresses more particularly in the the chapters following, where he says: That he shall for ever overthrow and destroy death; that then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf; that he shall not cry, neither shall his voice be heard abroad; that he shall bring forth judgment in truth: that he shall not be sorrowful nor turbulent, &c. And

Other prop-
erties of
Christ.

*Isa. 25. 8.
Isa. 35. 5.
Isa. 42. 2.*

Isaiab 49.
Acts 13.
 The com-
 mission of
 Christ.

The pro-
 phesy of
Daniel.
 touching
 Christ.

finally, in the forty ninth chapter, he alleges the words of God the father unto Christ touching his commission, in this sort: *It is a small thing that thou should be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel. Behold I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayst be salvation even unto the furthest part of the earth.*

And to conclude this matter, without alleging more prophecies for the same, which, in truth are infinite throughout the bible: *Daniel* that lived in the end of the captivity of *Babylon*, a little before *Aggeus*, *Zacharias*, and *Malackias*, who were the last Prophets that ever flourish'd amongst the *Jews*, almost five hundred years before the nativity of Christ; this *Daniel*, I say, reports of himself, that being in *Babylon*, and having fasted, worn haircloth, and pray'd long unto God; there came the Angel *Gabriel* unto him, at the time of evening sacrifice, and foretold him, not only the deliverance of the people of *Israel*, from the captivity of *Babylon* out of hand; (for the seventy years of their punishment, foretold by *Jeremiah*, were now expired) but also he told him further, that the time of the universal deliverance of mankind, from the bondage and captivity of sin, was now shortned; and that after seventy *hebdomades*, (which, as shall be shew'd afterwards, make up just the time that pass'd from rebuilding of the temple of *Jerusalem*, after their deliverance from *Babylon*, unto the birth of Christ) there should be born the Saviour of the world; and be put to death for redemption of mankind.

Dan. 9. 23. The Angel's words are these: *I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires. And do thou mark the word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are abridged upon thy people, and upon thy holy city; that prevarication may be consummate, and sin take an end; and iniquity be abolish'd, and everlasting justice be brought; and vision be accomplish'd, and prophecy, and the HOLY of HOLIES anointed. Know therefore, and*
mark,

mark, from the going forth of the word that Jerusalem be built again unto Christ the PRINCE; there shall be seven weeks, and sixty two weeks: --- and after sixty two weeks CHRIST shall be slain; and it shall not be his people that shall deny him, and the sanctuary shall the people dissipate with the prince to come, &c.

I might pass on further to other Prophets, and prophecies, and make no end, if I would allege what might be said in this behalf: for the whole Scripture runs all to this one point, to foretel and manifest Christ by signs, figures, parables, and prophecies; and for this cause was it principally written. But that which is already spoken, will be sufficient for our first consideration; whereby is seen, that among the *Jews*, from age to age, Christ was prophecied and foretold, together with the eternity of his kingdom, that should be spiritual.

The butt of
all Scrip-
ture.

Now follows a second consideration of the quality of Christ's person, no less of importance than the former, and that is of the Godhead of the Messias promised. I say the later *Jews* or Rabbins are different herein from us; as also they are in many other points and articles, wherein their ancestors, that were no Christians, did fully agree. Even as all hereticks are wont to do, that first break in one point, and then in another from the catholick faith: and so do run on from one to one, making themselves in all things as dislike as they can, out of hatred to that unity, whereunto their pride will not suffer them to return: so is it in the generation of this reprobate people, who first agreed with us in all, or most points, touching Christ to come, and denied only the fulfilling or application thereof, in Jesus our Saviour; but afterwards their ungracious offspring, being not able to stand in that dispute against us, devised a new plea, and betook themselves to a far higher degree of impiety, affirming, that we attributed many things unto Jesus, that were not foretold of the Messias to come; and among others, that he should be God, and the Son of God, and the second person in Trinity, &c.

The second
considera-
tion. That
Christ
should be
God and
man.

But

That
Christ
must be
both God
and man.
Gen. 3. 15.
The first
proof.

But herein, no doubt, these obstinate and graceless men, do shew themselves both ignorant of their own Scriptures, and disagreeing from the writings of their own fore-fathers. For, as for Scriptures, it is evident by all, or most of the prophecies asserted before, that Christ should, or the Messias, must be God, and the Son of God, endued with man's nature; that is, both man and God. So in *Genesis*, where he is call'd: The seed of the woman; it is apparent he is to be man; and in the same place, when he is promised: To crush the devil and break his head; who can do this but only God? likewise, when he is call'd: *The bud of our Lord*; his Godhood is signified: as is his manhood also, when in the same place he is named; *the fruit of the earth*. Who can interpret these speeches: *That his kingdom shall be everlasting*: That, *he shall endure until the Moon be taken away, and after*: That, *God begat him before Lucifer was created*: That, *no man can tell, or recount his generation*: That, *all nations, and Angels must adore him*: That, *he must sit at the right hand of God*; and many other such like speeches pronounced directly, and expressly of the Messias; who, I say, can understand, or interpret them, but of God; seeing that in man they cannot be verified?

And as for the last of these testimonies, concerning Christ's sitting at his father's right hand: three of our Evangelists do report, that Jesus did confound divers of the learned *Pharisees*, with alleging only these words of *David*, *Our Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand, till I make thy enemies the footstool of thy feet*. For, said Jesus, *if Christ be David's son, how did David call him his Lord?* signifying hereby, that altho' the Messias was to be *David's son*, according to his manhood; yet was he to be *David's Lord*, according to his Godhead. And so does both Rabbi *Jonathan*, and the publick commentaries of the *Hebrews*, interpret the place. *Micheas* is plain: *And thou Bethlehem Ephrata ---- out of thee shall come forth unto me, he that shall be the dominator*

The second
proof.
Mich. 5.

dominator in Israel: and his coming forth from the beginning, from the days of eternity. This cannot be understood of any mortal man, that ever was, or will be. Yet *Isaiah* goes further when he says: *A little child is born to us, and a son is given to us; and principality is made upon his shoulder; and his name shall be call'd marvelous, counselor, God, strong, father of the world to come. The prince of peace, &c.* In which words, we see that Christ is call'd God. But if the Jew does cavil here, and say, that *El* or *Elohim*, the Hebrew words, which we interpret God, in this place, may sometimes be applied to a creature; as in *Exodus* once *El* signifies an Angel; and *Elohim* at other times, is applied to Judges; then mark, and consider this discourse of *David* touching the Messias, to whom he says: *Goodly of beauty above the sons of men: grace is poured abroad in thy lips; therefore has God blessed thee for ever, &c. Thy seat, O God, for ever and ever: a rod of direction, the rod of thy kingdom: thou hast loved justice, and hast hated iniquity; therefore, God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* Here the Messias is call'd God twice, by the same word *Elohim*, as God his father is; and therefore, as the word signifies true God in the one, so must it also in the other.

Isaiah 9.

So is it in the Hebrew.

An objection answered.

Ex. 15. 11.

Psalms 44.

But to remove all ground of this refuge touching *El*, and *Elohim*, that are names of God, which may be communicated sometimes, and upon some occasions to creatures; most apparent it is, that the name *Jehovah*, which is call'd, *Tétragrammaton*, and which is so peculiar unto God alone, that it never is or can be communicated to others, this name, I say, which is of such reverence among the Jews, that they dare not pronounce it; but in place thereof, do read *Adonai*, that signifies Lord; is every where almost in Scripture attributed to Christ, namely, where the *Latin* interpreter has translated *Lord*: as for example, in two divers places of *Jeremiah*, after the long description of the Messias, which before I have recited, he concludes thus: *Hoc est nomen quod vocabunt*

The third proof.

Christ is call'd *Jehovah*.

See *Isa. 18. 7. & 28. 5. Jer. 23. 7.*

eum

Rab. Abba coment. in Thren. v. 16 Misd. Thehilim. in Psal. 20. v. 1. *eum Jehova justus noster*, this is the name which they shall call him, our just *Jehovah*; or as the *Hebrew* has word for word, *Jehovah* our *Justice*. And so do the ancient *Hebrew* expositors confess upon these places of *Jeremiah*; namely *Rabbi Abba*, who asks the question, what *Messias* shall be call'd? and then he answers out of this last place: *He shall be call'd the eternal Jehovah*. The like does *Misdraich* gather upon the twentieth *Psal*m, and *Rabbi Moses Hadarsan* expounding a place of the Prophet *Sophonias* cap. iii. ver. 9. concludes thus: *In this place Jehovah signifies nothing else but the Messias*.

Whereby appears, that as well in Scripture, as also in the opinion of old *Hebrew* expositors, the *Messias* was to be true God, and man. And I might allege many other testimonies of ancient Rabbins, if it were not too long: especially, if I would enter among that kind of expositors, whom they call *Cabalists*, who are more ancient and less brutish than are the other sort, which are term'd *Thalmudists*, I should find many clear and manifest declarations against the *Jews* doctrine and error of later times. And among others (for example only of *cabalistical* expositions) I refer the reader to the discourse of *Rabbi Hacadosch* (which in *Hebrew* signifies the holy Rabbin, and lived not long after Christ) upon the words of *Jeremiah* before cited; in which, because he finds the *Messias* to be call'd *Jehovah*, which word in *Hebrew* is compounded of the three letters *Jod*, *Vau*, and *He* twice repeated: this Doctor makes his discourse by art *Cabalist* in this manner.

Rab. Hacadosch in c. 9. Isa. The cabalistical discourse. “ Even as the letter *He* in *Jehovah*, is compounded
 “ of two other letters named *Daleth* and *Vau*, as appears
 “ by their form, so shall the *Messias*, that is signified by
 “ this word *Jehovah*, be made of two natures; the one
 “ divine, and the other human. And as in *Jehovah*,
 “ there is twice *He*; and consequently two *Daleths* and
 “ two *Vaus* contain'd therein: so are there two births,
 “ filiations, or childhoods in *Messias*; the one, whereby

“ he

“ he shall be the son of God ; and the other, whereby
 “ he shall be the son of a virgin, which *Isaiab* calls the
 “ prophetess. And as in *Jehovah* the letter *He* is twice
 “ put ; and yet both *Hes* do make in effect but one
 “ letter : so in *Messias* there shall be two distinct natures ;
 “ and yet they shall make but one Christ.” Thus talks
 the *Cabalists* upon the letters of *Jehovah*, according
 to the manner of their divinity ; and draws great
 mysteries as you see, from letters. In which kind of
 reasoning, altho’ we put no ground or stress at all ; yet
 it is sufficient to shew, that among the elder *Jews*, it
 was a known and confess’d doctrine, that Christ should
 be both God and man, and have two natures join’d
 distinctly in one person ; which is the same that we
Christians do affirm.

Isaiab 2.

Nay, I will add further, and this is greatly to be
 observ’d that the self-same ancient *Jews*, as some also
 of the later, do hold, and prove by Scripture ; that Christ
 shall be (for always they speak of the *Messias* to come)
 the very Son of God, & *verbum Dei Incarnatum*, and
 the word of God incarnate, or made flesh. And for
 the first, that he shall be the Son of God, they prove it
 out of divers places alleged by me before : as for example,
 out of *Genesis*, where the *Latin* text has ; The scepter
 of *Judab* shall not be taken away ; until he come that
 is to be sent, the *Hebrew* has, *until Silo come* ; which
Silo, Rabbi *Kimbi* proves by a long discourse, to
 signify as much, as *filius ejus*, *his son*, that is, the Son
 of God. The same they prove by the place of *Isaiab*,
 where the *Messias* is call’d *Germen Jehovah*, the seed, or
 son of *Jehovah*. Which the *Chaldee* paraphrase turns
 the *Messias* of *Jehovah*. They prove the same also out
 of divers *Psalms*, where Christ is call’d plainly the Son of
 God : as where it is said : “ He shall say unto me, thou
 “ art my father, &c. I will put him, my eldest son,
 “ more higher than all the kings of the earth, &c. *Jeho-*
 “ *vah* said unto me, thou art my Son ; this day have
 “ I begotten thee, &c. Take instruction you that judge
 “ the

The fourth
proof.

Christ
call’d the
Son of God

Gen. 49. 10
Rab. Da-
vid Kimbi
in l. radi-
cum.

Isaiab 4. 2.
Tharg. in
hunc locum.

Psal. 49.

Psal. 2.

Pſalm 2. “ the earth ; and happy are all they that truſt in him.”
 This is according to the Hebrew text. Which laſt words, can no ways be underſtood of the ſon of any man ; for that it is written : *Cursed is the man that puts his truſt in man.* Wherefore Rabbi *Jonathan*, Rabbi *Nathan*, Rabbi *Selomoth*, *Aben Ezra*, and others, do conclude by theſe, and other places which they allege, that the Meſſias muſt be the very Son of God.

The fifth proof. And for the ſecond point, they go yet further, affirming this ſon to be *verbum patris*, the word of God the Father. Which the foreſaid *Jonathan* in his *Chaldee* paraphraſe does expreſs in many tranſlations : as for example : where *Iſaiah* ſays, *Israel ſhall be ſaved in Jehovah with eternal ſalvation* (which *Jehovah* ſignifies Chriſt, as all men confeſs) * *Jonathan* turns it thus : *Israel ſhall be ſaved by God's word.* So again, where God ſays by *Hoſea* ; *I will ſave the houſe of Judah by Jehovah their God* (which is by Chriſt) *Jonathan* tranſlates it thus : *I will ſave Judah by the word of their God.* In like manner, where *David* writes ; *Jehovah ſaid to my Lord, ſit at my right hand, &c.* *Jonathan* expreſſes it thus : *Jehovah ſaid unto his word, ſit at my right hand.* So Rabbi *Iſaac Arama* writing upon *Genesis*, expounds this verſe of the *Pſalm* : *He ſent his word and healed them, &c.* To be meant of Meſſias, that ſhall be God's word. And Rabbi *Simeon* the chief of all the *Cabalists*, upon thoſe words of *Job* : *I ſhall ſee God in my fleſh*, gathers, that the word of God ſhall take fleſh in a woman's womb. So that this doctrine was nothing ſtrange among the ancient Rabbins.

Hofea 11.
Pſalm 110.
Rab. Iſaac com. in c. 47 Gen.
Pſalm 106.
20 R. Simeon Ben. Johai.com. in c. 10. Gen.
Job 19.26.
R. Simeon in Zoar.
Deut. 6. 4. For further confirmation whereof, ſeeing the matter is of ſo great importance, conſider what is recorded in a treatiſe call'd *Zoar*, of high authority among the *Jeros*, where Rabbi *Simeon*, that was laſt before alleged, cites a place out of old Rabbi *Ibba*, upon theſe words in *Deuteronomy* : *Jehovah our Lord is one Jehovah.* Which words the ſaid ancient Rabbi *Ibba* interprets thus : by the firſt *Jehovah* in this ſentence (being the incom-

municable

municable name of God) is signified, says he, God the Father prince of all things. By the next words (*our Lord*) is signified God the Son, that is fountain of all sciences. And by the second *Jehovah* in the same sentence is signified, God the Holy Ghost, proceeding of them both. To all which is there added the word *one*, to signify, that these three are indivisible. But this secret shall not be reveal'd until the coming of the Messias. Hitherto are the words of Rabbi *Ibba*, reported in *Zoar* by Rabbi *Simeon*. Where also the said Rabbi *Simeon* interprets these words of *Isaiah*: *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbath*, in this manner. *Isaiah by repeating three times Holy*, says he, *does as much as if he had said; Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Spirit; which three Holies, do make but one only Lord God of Sabbath.*

The blessed Trinity proved by an ancient Rabbín.

Finally, I will conclude this controversy between the later *Jews*, and us, with the authority of learned *Philo*, who lived in the very same time with Christ; and was sent ambassador twice to *Rome*, in the behalf of his nation in *Alexandria*: that is, first in the fifteenth year of *Tiberius* the emperor (which was three years before Christ's passion, and the very same year wherein he was baptized by St. *John*) and the second time about eight years after, to wit, in the first of the reign of *Caligula*. This man, that was the learnedst, that ever wrote among the *Jews*, after the writers of holy Scripture deceased, made a special book of the banishment of his countrymen, where he has this discourse ensuing.

The sixth proof.
Philo l. 2. legat. Ruff. l. 1. hist. c. 6. Euseb. in chron.

“ What time may be appointed, says he, for the return home of us banish'd *Jews*, it is hard to determine. “ For by tradition we have, that we must expect the death of a high-priest: but of those, some die quickly, “ and some live longer. But I am of opinion, that this “ high-priest will be the very word of God: which will “ be void of all sin, both voluntary, and involuntary; “ whose Father shall be God, and this word shall be that “ Father's wisdom, by which all things in the world “ were

Philo l. De Exulibus.

“ were created. His head shall be anointed with oil,
 “ and his kingdom shall shine and flourish for ever.”
 This wrote *Philo* at that time, when he little imagin’d,
 that the same high-priest, whom he so much expected,
 and the same word of God, whose kingdom he describes,
 was now already come into the world, And this shall
 suffice for our second consideration: what manner of
 Messias the *Jews* did expect.

The third
 considera-
 tion whe-
 ther Christ
 should
 change the
 law of
Moses.
Gal. 3. & 4.
Heb. 7.

Now in the third place it is to be consider’d, what
 authority and power the Messias should have, at his
 appearance upon earth; and whether he should change
 or abrogate the law of *Moses*; or no: wherein there
 is no less controversy between us and the later *Jews*,
 than in the former point of his divinity. For we hold
 with *St. Paul*, that the law of *Moses* was given unto the
Jews but for a time, to entertain that people withal,
 and by the outward signs and ceremonies which it had
 (whereof the most part, or all, prefigured Christ to
 come) to be their school-master and leader to the times
 of faith, wherein it should be abrogated, and a far more
 perfect law set down by Christ in place thereof.

The law
 of *Moses*
 imperfect.
Heb. 7.
Acts 15.
Gal. 3.

This we prove first, for the law of *Moses* was an im-
 perfect law, bringing nothing to perfection, as *St. Paul*
 well notes. It was, as *St. Peter* says, a burdensom law,
 which the *Jews* themselves were not able to bear, for the
 multitude of ceremonies therein contain’d. It was a
 carnal, and servile law, consisting most in the external.
 It was a law of terror and fear, more than of love and
 liberty of spirit. It was a law, as I said before, of signs
 and figures for things to come; and consequently to cease,
 when those things, which it prefigured, should come to
 be present. It was a law peculiar and proper to the *Jews*
 alone, without regard to all the rest of the world; and
 the exercise thereof was allow’d only in the country of
Jury: and that which is more, it was not permitted, but
 in one place only of that country, that is, in *Jerusalem*,
 whither every man was bound to repair three times a year;
 to wit, at the *Pasque*, at the *Pentecost*, and at the feast of
Tabernacles;

Deut. 15.
Deut. 13,
& 14.
Lev. 5, &
23.
Exod. 23.
Deut. 27.

Tabernacles; and in that place alone to make their sacrifices, and in no other country or place besides.

Now then, reasons the learned divine: if this law of *Moses* were for the *Jews* and *Jury* only, how could it serve for the time of the *Messias*, who was to be king, as well of the *Gentiles*, as of the *Jews*; and to rule all people in the world, that should believe in him, under one law? if the exercise of this law were allowable only, and lawful in *Jerusalem*, how could it possibly be fulfilled by *Christians*, that are dispersed over all the world? as for example, how could they repair to *Jerusalem* thrice every year? how could every woman that should dwell in *England*, or *India*, repair to *Jerusalem* for her purification after every child-birth, as by the law she was commanded? most evident it is then, which we said before, that this law was given but to endure for a time. And to use *St. Paul's* own words, it was but *Introductio melioris spei, an introduction to a better hope.*

Good reasons.

Psalms 2.
21, 26.
Isaiab 2.
11, 19.

Lev. 12.
Exodus 13.
Numb. 8.
Heb. 7.

It was but an entertainment of that people, which by their being among the *Ægyptians* were prone to idolatry, until *Christ* should come and ordain a perfect law, that is, a law of spirit and internal affection; a law of love and liberty; a law that should be common to all men; serve for all countries, times, places, and persons; a law that should be written in the bowels of our hearts; a law that should be tolerable, easy, sweet, plain, light, brief, and factible, as well to the poor, as to the rich; a law, to conclude, that should consist in charity.

The new law of *Christ*, and the perfections thereof.

This signified *Moses*, when he said to his people, after he had delivered the former law unto them: *A prophet of thy nation, and of thy brethren like unto me, will the Lord thy God raise up to thee: him shalt thou hear.* As tho' he said: you shall hear me but until he come, that must be a law-giver as my self; but yet of a more perfect law; and therefore more to be heard and obeyed. And then he addeth; *He that will not hear his words, which he shall speak in my name, I will be the revenger.* Which words cannot be veri-

Deut. 18,

Deut. 34. fixed in any other prophet after *Moses* until Christ; for of those prophets the scripture saith: *There arose no prophet like unto Moses in Israel.* Which is to be understood, that they had no authority to be law-makers, as *Moses* had; but were all bound to the observation of that law only, which *Moses* left until Christ came, whom *Moses* here calls *a prophet as himself*; that is a law-maker, and exhorts all men to hear and obey him.

This yet is made more plain by the prophecy of *Isaiah* 2. *Isaiah*, who saith; *Out of Sion shall come a law, and the word of God out of Jerusalem.* Which cannot be understood of *Moses's* law, that had been published eight hundred years before this was spoken; and that from the mount *Sinai*, and not from *Sion*: but Christ's law began from *Sion* and *Jerusalem*, and from thence was spread into all the world. Which the same *Isaiah*

Isaiah 19. foresaw, when talking of the Messias he says: *In that day there shall be an altar to God in the midst of the land of Ægypt: and the title of our Lord at the end thereof, &c. And God shall be known to the Ægyptians at that day; and they shall honour him with sacrifices and oblations.* Which words could not be verified in the old law of *Moses*; for by that law, the *Ægyptians* could have neither altar, nor sacrifice: but at Christ's coming it was fulfilled, when the *Ægyptian*, were made *Christians*, and enjoyed both the altars, and sacrifices, that *Christians* do use.

The same thing was foretold by God in *Malachi*, where he says to the *Jews*, and of the *Jewish* sacrifices: *I have no pleasure in you; neither will I receive oblations at your hands: for that from the uprising of the sun, unto the going down thereof, my name is great among the Gentiles; and they do sacrifice unto me every where, and do offer unto my name a pure oblation,----saith the Lord God of Hosts.* In which words, we see first a reprobation of the *Jewish* sacrifice; and consequently of the law of *Moses*, which depended principally of that sacrifice. Secondly we see, that among the *Gentiles*, there should be

The reprobation of the old law was a promise of a new.

be a pure manner of sacrifice, more grateful unto God than the other was, and such as might be performed in every place of the world, and not be tied to one place only, as the *Mosaical* law and sacrifice was.

And finally, I will conclude this whole matter with the express words of God himself, concerning the ceremonies and precepts of the old law : *Dedi eis precepta non bona, & judicia in quibus non vivent.* *Ezek. 20.* Therefore I also gave them precepts not good, and judgments wherein they shall not live.

That is, they were not good to continue perpetually, nor shall they live in them for ever, but until the time by me appointed : of which time, he determines more particularly by *Jeremiah* the prophet, *Jere. 31.* in these words : *Behold the days shall come, and I will make a new covenant or testament with the house of Israel and Judah : not according to that covenant which I made with your fathers, when I brought them forth of the land of Ægypt.* A new testament promised.

Where you see, that at the coming of Christ into this world (for of him and his birth, he talks at large in all this chapter) there shall be a new testament, containing a different law from that of the old testament, which was given to the *Jews*, at their going forth of *Ægypt*.

Thus much hath then hitherto been shewed, that Christ in all ages was foretold and promised ; that he should be God, and that his authority should be to change the law of *Moses*, that was given but for a time, and to establish a new law and covenant, and a new testament of his own, that should endure and continue for ever. The sum of that which has been said.

And altho' these things be very wonderful and sufficient to establish any man's belief in the world, when he shall see them fulfilled; which shall be the argument of my second section; yet rests not the scripture here, but passes further, and foretells every particular act, accident, and circumstance of importance, that shall fall out about the *Messias* in his coming, incarnation, birth, life, death, and resurrection. As for

The fourth consideration. All particulars foretold of Christ.

example; at what particular time and season he should appear, *Gen. xlix. 10. Dan. ix. 26.* That he should be born of a virgin, *Isaiab vii. 14.* That the place of his birth should be the town of *Bethlehem, Micah v. 1.* That at his birth all the infants round about should be slain for his sake, *Jeremiab xxxi. 15.* That the kings of the East should come and adore him, and offer gold and other gifts unto him, *Psalms lxxi. 10.* That he should be presented by his mother in the temple of *Jerusalem, Malachi iii. 1.* That he should flee into *Ægypt*, and be recalled thence again, *Hosea xi. 2. Isaiab xix. 1.* That *John Baptist* should go before him, and cry in the desert, *Isaiab xl. 3. Malachi iii. 1.*

After this, that he should begin his own preaching with all humility, quietness, and clemency of spirit, *Isaiab xlii. 2.* That he should do strange miracles, and heal all diseases, *Isaiab xxix. 8. and xxxv. 5. and lxi. 1.* That he should die for the sins of all the world, *Isaiab liii. Daniel xxvi.* That he should be betrayed by his own disciple, *Psalms xl. 10. and liv. 14. and cviii. 8.* That he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver. *Zachariab xi. 12.* That with those thirty pieces there should be bought afterwards a potters field, *Jeremiab xxx.* That he should ride into *Jerusalem* upon an ass before his passion, *Zachariab ix. 9.* That the *Jews* should beat and buffet his face, and defile the same with spitting upon him, *Isaiab l. 6.* That they should whip, and tear, and rent his body, before they put him to death, *Isaiab liii. 2. Psalms xxxvii. 18.* That they should put him to death among thieves and malefactors, *Isaiab lii. 12.* That they should give him vinegar to drink, divide his apparel, and cast lots for his upper garment, *Psalms lxviii. 22. and xxi. 19.* That he should rise again from death the third day, *Psalms xv. 19.* *Hosea vi. 3.* That he should ascend to heaven, and sit at the right hand of God his father for ever, *Psalms lxvii. 19.*

All these particulars, and a number more, were revealed to the patriarchs and prophets, touching the coming of the Messias, some, nigh two thousand, and the last of all, above four hundred years before Christ was born. Which if we lay together, and consider withal, how exactly they were fulfilled afterwards in the person of JESUS, as in the next section shall be declared: if we add also to this, that we have received these prophecies and predictions from a nation, that most of all others does hate us; and that the same are to be seen and read in their bibles, even word for word as they are in ours: if you hold in memory also, what invincible proofs were alledged before in the second chapter, for the infallible truth and certainty of those *Hebrew* scriptures; you shall find, that hardly any thing can be imagined for manifestation of a truth before it came to pass, which God hath not observed in foreshewing the Messias.

And all these considerations are touching the *Jews*. There remains somewhat to be said of the *Gentiles*, who though they were to receive their principal knowledge in this affair from the *Jewish* nation, to whom the Messias was first and principally promised, and from whom the *Gentiles* had to expect both their favour and his apostles, as also the scriptures for testimony and witness of them both; and finally all their certain knowledge and sound understanding in the mysteries of Christ: yet had they also among themselves some kind of notice and forewarning in this matter, which being joined with that, which I have set down before of the *Jews*, and examined at the light of God's divine prophecies before alledged; it will make very much for confirmation of our christian verity. And therefore this last consideration shall be, of the foreknowledge of *Gentiles* in this behalf.

The fifth consideration. Manifestation of Christ to the *Gentiles*.

For better understanding whereof it is to be noted, that besides all knowledge of the Messias, that divers

Chap. II. *Gentiles* might have by the *Hebrew* scriptures, which, as I have shewed before, were in the *Greek* language divers ages before Christ was born ; or by the instruction or conversation of *Jews*, with whom many *Pagans* did live familiarly ; there remained three ways peculiar to *Gentiles*, whereby they received some understanding and forewarning of this great mystery. The first was, by tradition and writings of their ancestors. The second, by prophecies of their own. The third, by admonishment of their idols and oracles, especially when the time of Christ's appearance drew near.

The first way.

Tradition of learning among *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

And for the first way, it is evident, that as the *Jews* received divers things by succession from their forefathers ; and they again from *Moses* ; and *Moses* from the patriarchs, *Jacob*, *Isaac*, and *Abraham* who was the first man, from whom that whole nation proceeded, and in whom they were distinguished from all other people in the world : so had the *Gentiles*, and other nations their succession also of doctrine and monuments, even from the beginning ; altho', the lower they went, the more corrupt they were, and more obscured in divine knowledge, by their exercise in idolatry. So we know that the *Romans* had their learning from the *Grecians* ; and the *Grecians* from the *Ægyptians* ; the *Ægyptians* from the *Chaldeans*, who were the first people, that received instruction in divine matters from *Adam*, *Mathusala*, *Noah*, and others of those first and ancient fathers.

Ensch. in Chron. Abraham. Job. Zoroastres.

Now then it is to be considered, that by consent of writers, there were three famous men that lived together in those ancient times ; to wit, *Abraham*, who descending from *Heber*, was the father and beginner of the *Jews* or *Hebrews* : and with him *Job*, and one *Zoroastres*, that were not of that lineage of *Heber*, but as we call them for distinction's sake, either *Heathens* or *Gentiles*, altho' that difference was not then in use. And of *Job*, we know by the testimony of his book, that he

was

was a most holy and virtuous man. Of *Zoroastres*, we know only, that he was greatly learned, and left monuments thereof unto his posterity.

This *Zoroastres*, living in *Abraham's* time, might by account of scripture, see or speak with *Noah*. For that *Abraham* was born above threescore years before *Noah* deceased. And *Noah* was born above five hundred years before *Mathusala* died, which *Mathusala* had lived two hundred and forty years with our first father *Adam*, that had enjoyed conversation both with God and Angels. And thereby, no doubt, could tell many high and secret mysteries, especially touching Christ, in whom all his hope for redemption of his posterity did consist. which mysteries and hidden knowledge, it is not unlike but that *Abraham*, *Job*, *Zoroastres*, and others, who lived at that time with them, might receive at the third hand, by *Noah* and his Children, I mean, * *Shem*, *Cham*, and *Japheth*, who had lived before the flood, and had seen *Mathusala*; which *Mathusala* lived, as is said, so many years with *Adam*.

Hence it is, that in the writings of *Zoroastres*, which are yet extant, † or recorded by other authors in his name, there are found very many plain speeches of the son of God, whom he calleth, *secundam mentem*, the second mind. And much more is it to be seen in the writings of *Hermes Trismegistus*, who lived after in *Ægypt*, and received his learning from this *Zoroastres*, that these first heathen philosophers had manifest understanding of this second person in trinity, whom *Hermes* calls, *The first begotten son of God; his only son; his dear, eternal, immutable, and incorruptible son, whose sacred name is ineffable*: those are his words. And after him again among the *Grecians*, were *Orpheus*, *Hesiodus*, and others, that uttered the like speeches of the son of God: as also did the *Platonists*, whose words and sentences are too long to repeat in this place. But he that will see them gathered together at large, let him read either *Origen* against *Celsus* the heathen; or else

* The Jews have tradition that *Abraham* served *Shem*, fifteen years in *Chaldea*.
† See *Clem. Alex. lib. 2 Strom.* and *Orig. 1. 6. con. Cels.* and *Procl. 1. 2. & 3. in Parm. Platonis Trismegist. Moreu. Her. in Præmon. c. 1. 3. de incept. Grecians.*

St. Cyril in his first book against *Julian* the apostate. And this shall suffice for the first way, whereby the *Gentiles* had understanding of Christ.

The prophecies touching Christ among the *Gentiles*. *Lact. lib. 1 div. Inst. c. 6.*

For the second thing which I mentioned, it is to be understood, that among the *Gentiles* there were certain prophetesses, or women prophets, called *Sibyllæ*, which, as *Lactantius* gathers, may signify so much, in the Greek as either *counsellor to God*, or *revealers of God's councils*. And these women being indued, as it seems, with a certain spirit of prophecy, did utter from time to time, tho' in such terms as most *Gentiles* understood them not, most wonderful particularities of Christ to come, agreeing, as it were, wholly with the prophets of *Israel*; or rather setting down many things in much more plain and evident speech, than did the others: the one of them beginning her Greek metre in these very words; *know thy God, which is the son of God*, &c. Another of them makes a whole discourse of Christ in Greek verses called *Acrosticki*, for that the beginning of every verse, is by some letter appointed in order, out of some one sentence that runs through the whole. As for example: the sentence that passed through the beginning of those verses which now we talk of, was this, * *Jesus Christ, son of God, saviour, cross*. And there were so many verses in the whole discourse, as there are letters in this sentence. The total argument being of the incarnation, life, death, glory, and judgment of the son of God. And the last two verses of all the metre are these; *he that hath been described by our acrostick verses, is an immortal saviour, and a king, that must suffer for our sins*.

Lact. lib. 4 Instit. c. 6.
* *St. Augustine* translates all the verses. *1. 18. de civ. Dei. c. 23.*

The Greek verses of the *Sibyls* of what importance and authority.

And as these very prophecies of the *Sibyls* are of marvellous importance, to confirm the verity of our christian religion; and are alledged often for that purpose by the most grave, and learnedst fathers of our primitive church: as for example, by *Justinus* the martyr, in his apology for christians; by *Origen* against *Celsus*: by *Arnobius*, and his scholar *Lactantius*, against *Gentiles*:
by

by St. Cyril, against *Julian* the apostate: by St. *Augustine*, in his city of God: by *Eusebius*, and *Constantine* the emperor, and others: I will say something in this place, for the authority and credit of these verses; lest any man perhaps might imagine, as some *Gentiles* in old time would seem to do, that they were devised or invented by christians. And the most of my proofs shall be out of a learned * oration, written in *Latin* by the forefaid emperor, to a council of prelates in his days, wherein he endeavoured to shew the undoubted authority of these *Sibyls* prophecies, which he esteemed so much, after diligent search made for their credit and sincerity, as they seem to have been a great cause of his constant zeal and fervour in christianity.

* See this oration in *Euseb. l. 4. c. 32. de vita Constant. at the end.*

First then he shews, that these predictions of the *Sibyls*, could not be devised or feigned by christians, or made after the time of Christ's nativity; for *Marcus Varro*, a most learned *Roman*, who lived almost a hundred years before Christ, makes mention at large of these *Sibyls*, who in number, he says, were ten; and of their writings, countries, and ages: as also of the writers or authors, that, before his time, had left memory of them. And both he, and *Fenestella* another heathen do affirm, that the writings of these *Sibyls*, were gathered by the *Romans* from all parts of the world, where they might be heard of, and laid up with diligence, and great reverence in the Capitol, under the charge and custody of the high-priests and other officers, in such sort, as no man might see or read them, but only certain magistrates called the *fifteen*, and much less might any man come to falsify or corrupt them.

The first proof for credit of the *Sibyl* verses. *Var. lib. de reb. div. ad Cæsarem pont. max. Fenest. ca. de 15. viris.*

Secondly he shews, that *Sibylla Erythraea*, who made, the former acrostick verses of Christ, testifies of her self, that she lived about six hundred years after the flood of *Noah*: and her countryman *Apollo-dorus Erythraeus*, and *Varro* do report, that she lived before the war of *Troy*, and prophesied to the *Grecians*, that went to that war, that *Troy* should be taken. Which

The second proof.

was

Laet. l. 1. was more than a thousand years before Christ was born.
instit. c. 6. *Cicero* also, that was slain more than forty years before
Cicero. Christ's nativity, translated into *Latin*, the former *
 * See *Cice-* acrostick verses, as *Constantine* says, which translation
ro of these was to be seen in his works, when *Constantine* wrote
 acrostick verses of this oration; so that by no means they could be devised
Sibylla, l. or brought in by christians.
2. de divi-

natione. Thirdly he shews, that the same *Cicero* in divers
 The third places of his works, besides the mention of these acro-
 proof. stick verses, insinuates also another prophecy of *Sibylla*,
 touching a king that should rise over all the world,
 wherewith himself and the *Romans* were greatly trou-
 bled: and therefore in one place, after a long invective
 against his enemy *Anthony*, that would seem to give

Cicero l. 2. credit to that prophecy; or rather as *Cicero* doth urge
de divin. against him, would have had the same fulfilled in *Julius*
paulo post *Cæsar*, he concludes thus: *let us deal with the prelates*
medium. *of our religion, to alledge rather any one thing out of the*
books of Sibylla, than a king, whom neither the Gods,
nor yet men, can suffer to be in Rome.

Cic. l. 1. The like prophecy of *Sibylla* touching a king, is in-
ep. fam. sinuated by the same *Cicero* in his first book of epistles
ep. 1, 2, 3, to *Lentulus*; to wit; that † when the *Romans* should
4, 5, 6. restore a king in *Ægypt*, by force; then should ensue
 † See *lib.* an universal king that should be lord over *Romans* and
2. oraculo- all others. Which prophecy, being much urged by
rum Sibyl. || *Cato* the tribune, against the restoring of *Ptolomæus*
Epist. 5. *Auletes* late king of *Ægypt*, that for his evil govern-
 || He was ment was expelled by his subjects: the matter was
 father to judged to be of such weight by all the *Roman* senate,
Cleopatra. I mean the sequel of this prophecy, that whereas other-
 The fear wise, for many respects, they were greatly inclined to
 which the have restored the said *Ptolomy*; yet in regard of this
Romans had of the *religion*, as they called it, they changed their minds.
 universal King pro- But what? could they alter by this, the determination
 phesied of God? no truly; for soon after, king *Ptolomy* per-
 by *Sibylla.* ceiving the senators minds to be altered, fled secretly
Dion. l. 39. from *Rome* to one *Gabinus*, that was governor of *Syria*;
list. and

and for five millions of gold, that he promised him, he was by the forces of *Gabinus* restored; and so, not long after, was Christ born, according to the meaning of the *Sibyls* prophecy.

Fourthly, the said emperor *Constantine* proves the authority of the *Sibyls* verses, for that *Augustus Caesar* before Christ was born, had such regard for them, that he laid them in more strait order, than before (as *Suetonius* a heathen, in his life, reports) under the altar of *Apollo*, in the hill *Palatine*; where no man might have the sight of them, but by special licence: which licence, *Constantine* proveth, that *Virgil* the poet had; for that he was in high favour with *Augustus*. And therefore in a certain eclogue, or composition of verses, that he made in praise of a young child named *Salonius*, newly born to *Asinius Pollio*, *Augustus's* great friend, or, as others take it, of *Marcellus*, a little boy, that was nephew to *Augustus* by his sister *Octavia*; or rather of them both, for adulation of *Augustus*: he applies, I say, to one, or both of these young infants, the whole prophecy, which he had read in these verses of *Sibylla*, touching the birth of Christ, and of the peace, grace, and golden world, that should come with him: upon which subject he begins thus:

The fourth proof.

Suet. tranq. c. 3. de vita Augusti.

The prophecies of *Sibylla* acknowledged by *Virgil*.

*Ultima Cumæi venit jam temporis ætas,
Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo,
Jam redit & virgo; redeunt Saturnia regna.*

Virg. eclog. 4.
Christ's preordination.

That is, now is come the last age prophesied by *Sibylla* called *Cumæa*: now comes to be fulfilled the great ordinance and providence of God, appointed from the beginning of the world; (these were *Sibyls* words) now comes the virgin, and the first golden days of *Saturnus* shall return again.

Thus much translated *Virgil* out of *Sibylla*, touching the eternal determination of God, for Christ's coming into this world; as also of his mother the virgin, and of the infinite blessings that should appear with him.

Now

Now ensues in the same poet, what *Sibylla* had said, for Christ's actual nativity.

Christ's
birth.

*Jam nova progenies cælo dimittitur alto,
Chara Deum soboles, &c.*

Now a new progeny or offspring is sent down from heaven, the dearly beloved issue or child of the Gods: And note here, *Sibylla* said plainly, *Chara dei soboles*, the dearly beloved son of God, and not of Gods; but *Virgil* would follow the stile of his time. And thirdly, he setteth down out of *Sibylla*, the effect, and cause of the son of God's nativity, in these words:

Christ's
cause of
coming.

*Te duce, si qua manent, sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvant formidine terras.*

That is, thou being our leader or captain, the remnant of our sins shall be made void, or taken away, and shall deliver the world for ever from fear for the same: these are *Virgil's* words translated, as I said, out of *Sibylla*. And now consider you in reason, whether these prophecies might be applied, as *Virgil* applied them, to those poor children in *Rome*, or no, who died soon after this flattery of *Virgil*, without doing good either to themselves or others? altho' perhaps in this point, the poet is to be excused; in that, he being not able to imagine, what the *Sibyl* should mean, made his advantage thereof, in applying the same to please *Augustus*.

Constantine's
opinion of the
spirit of
Sibylla Erythraea.
orat. ad
cæsum.
Sanct. c. 18

These then are the proofs which *Constantine* uses, for the credit and authority of the *Sibyl's* verses. And of *Sibylla Erythraea* in particular, that made the acrostick verses, before mentioned, of Christ's death and passion, he concluded in these words: *These are the things which fell from heaven into the mind of this virgin to foretel. For which cause, I am induced to account her blessed, whom our saviour did vouchsafe to choose for a prophetess, to denounce unto the world his holy providence towards us.* And we may consider, in this whole discourse

discourse of *Constantine*, for authority of these verses. First, that he uses only the testimony of such writers, as lived before Christ was born, or *Christians* thought upon. Secondly, he uses these proofs to no meaner audience, than to a council and congregation of learned men. Thirdly, he was an emperor which uses them; that is, one that had means to see, and examine the original copies in the *Roman* treasury. Fourthly, he had great learned men about him, who were skilful, and would be diligent in the search of such an antiquity of importance; especially *Lactantius*, that was master to his son *Crispus*, and who most of any other author, recites and confirms the said *Sibyl's* verses: and *Eusebius Casariensis*, that wrote the ecclesiastical history, and records therein this oration of *Constantine*. And finally, we may consider, that *Constantine* was the first publick *Christian* emperor, and lived within three hundred years after Christ; when the records of the *Romans* were yet whole to be seen. He was a religious, wise, and grave emperor; and therefore never would have bestowed so much labour to confirm such a thing, at such a time, to such an audience; had not the matter been of singular importance. And thus much of the second point touching prophets among *Gentiles*.

Lactantius

See *Euseb. l. 4. c. 32. de vita Constantini*. How this oration was first written in *Latin*, and translated into *Greek*.

There remains only a word or two to be spoken of the third; which is of the confession of devils and oracles, concerning Christ's coming; especially, when the time of his appearance drew near, and they began to forefeel his power and virtue. Wherein, as I might alledge divers examples recorded by the *Gentiles* themselves, so as I have been somewhat long in the former points; and shall have occasion to say more of this matter, in another place hereafter: I will touch here only two oracles of *Apollo* concerning this matter. The one whereof, was to a priest of his own, that demanded him of true religion, and of God; to whom he answered thus in *Greek*: O thou unhappy priest, why dost thou ask me of God, that is the father of all things; and

Of the confession of oracles, concerning Christ's coming.

The first oracle. *Suidas in Thulis. & Porphy. & Plutarch. of de oracul.*

of this most renowned king's dear and only son; and of the spirit that contains all. Alas, that spirit will enforce me shortly to leave this habitation and place of oracles.

The second oracle.

*Suidas in
vita Au-
gust. Niceph.
l. 1. hist.
c. 17.*

The other oracle was to *Augustus Cæsar*, about the very time that Christ was ready to appear in flesh. For whereas the said emperor, now drawing into age, would needs go to *Delphos*, and there learn of *Apollo*, who should reign after him, and what should become of things when he was dead: *Apollo* would not answer, for a great space; notwithstanding *Augustus* had been very liberal in making the great sacrifice called *Hecatomb*. But in the end, when the emperor began to iterate his sacrifice again, and to be instant for an answer: *Apollo*, as it were, forced, uttered these strange words unto him. *An Hebrew child, that rules over the blessed Gods, commands me to leave this habitation, and out of hand to get me to hell; but yet do you depart in silence from our altars.* Thus much was *Apollo* enforced to utter of his own misery, and of the coming of the *Hebrew* boy, that should put him to banishment. But yet the deceitful spirit, to hold still his credit, would not have the matter revealed to many: whereupon, *Augustus* falling into a great musing with himself, what this answer might import; returned to *Rome*, and builded there an altar in the capitol, with this *Latin* inscription, as *Nicephorus* affirms: *Ara Primogeniti Dei.* The altar of God's first begotten son.

*Niceph. l. 1.
hist. c. 17.*

The conclusion of this first section.

Thus then have I declared, how the coming of God's son into the world was foretold both to *Jew* and *Gentile*, by all means that possibly in reason might be devised; that is by prophecies, signs, figures, ceremonies, tradition, and by the confession of devils themselves. Not only his coming was foretold, but also why, and for what cause he was to come: that is, to be a saviour of the world; to die for sin; to ordain a new law, and more perfect commonwealth. How also he was to come: to wit, in man's flesh; in likeness of sin;

sin ; in poverty and humility. The time likewise of his appearance was foresignified, together with the manner of his birth, life, actions, death, resurrection, and ascension. And finally, nothing can be more desired for the foreknowledge of any thing to come, than was delivered and uttered concerning the Messias, before Christ, or *Christians* were talked of in the world. Now then remains it to consider and examine, whether these particulars, foretold so long ago of the Messias to come, do agree in JESUS, whom we acknowledge for the true Messias. And this shall be the subject and argument of all the rest of our speech in this chapter.

The argument of the two Sections following.

S E C T. III.

How the former predictions were fulfilled in Jesus, being upon earth.

ALTHO' in the points before recited, which were to be fulfilled in the Messias at his coming, we have some controversy and disagreement with the *Jew*, as hath been shewed : yet our principal contention in them all, is with the *Gentile* and *Heathen*, that believe no scriptures. For in divers of the forenamed articles, the *Jew* stands with us, and for us ; and offers his life in defence thereof, as much as if he were a *Christian* : so, that the *Gentile* oftentimes is forced to marvel, when he sees a people so extreemly bent against another as the *Jews* are against *Christians* ; and yet to stand so peremptorily in defence of those very principles, which are the proper causes of their disagreement.

Our controversy with *Gentiles*.

But here the *Jew* makes answer, that his disagreement from us, is in the application of those principles. For in no wise he will allow, that they were or may be verified in Jesus. And herein he stands against us much more obstinately, than does the *Gentile*. For the *Gentile*, as soon as he comes once to understand, and believe the prophecies of scripture, makes no doubt

Our controversy with the *Jews*.

or

or difficulty in the application thereof; for he sees the same most evidently fulfilled in our saviour. Which is the cause, that few or no *Gentiles*, since Christ's appearance, have come to be *Jews*, but presently also they passed over to be *Christians*.

The obstinacy of the *Jews*.

But the *Jew* by no means will be moved to yield, tho' he has neither scripture, nor reason, nor probability for his defence: which among other things is a very great argument to prove, that Jesus was the true Messias indeed; seeing that among the marks of the true Messias set down by God's prophets, this was one: that he should be refused by the *Jewish* nation. Hence are those words of the Holy Ghost, so long before uttered: *The stone, which the *builders refused, is made the head stone of the corner: this is done by God, and is marvellous in our eyes.* Hence is that great complaint of *Isaiab*, touching the incredulity and obstinacy of this people against their Messias at his coming; which *Moses* also long before *Isaiab*, expressed most effectually.

Psal. 118.

Isaiab 28.

*The builders are the *Jews* who take upon them to build God's house *Mat.*

21. *Isa.* 6.

Deut. 28.

The *Jews* obstinacy against us, a great argument for us.

It makes then not a little for our cause, gentle reader, that the *Jewish* nation is so wilfully bent against us; and that they refused Christ peremptorily, at his being among them. For whomsoever that nation shall receive and acknowledge, it were a great argument by scripture, that he were not indeed the true Messias. But yet to demonstrate to the world, how little shew of reason they have, in standing thus against their own salvation, and refusing Jesus as they do: I will in as great brevity as I may, run over the chief points, that passed at his being upon earth; and thereby examine by the testimonies of his greatest enemies, whether the foresaid prophecies, and all other signs, which have been from the beginning, to foretel unto us the true Messias, were fulfilled in him and his actions, or no.

The division of this Section into four considerations.

And as the matters are many and divers, that will come to be handled, I will for order sake, reduce all to four considerations; whereof the first shall be touching the time foreprophecied of the coming of Messias; and

and whether the same agreed with Christ's nativity, or no. The second shall be of divers particulars, that passed in Christ's incarnation, birth, circumcision, and other accidents, until the time that he began to preach. The third shall be of his life, conversation, miracles, and doctrine. The fourth and last, of his passion, death, resurrection, and ascension. In all which, as I said before, I will use no one author or testimony of our side, for proving any thing that is in controversy between us; but all shall pass by trial, either of their own scriptures; or of manifest force and consequence of reason; or else by expressed record of our professed enemies.

The testimonies here used.

For the first then, concerning the time, which is the principal and head of all the rest, it is to be noted, that by consent of all writers, both *Pagan*, *Jewish*, and *Christian*, Jesus, whom we believe and confess to be true Christ, was born the twenty fifth day of *December*, in the end of the one and fortieth year of *Augustus's* reign; which was fifteen years before his reign ended. Also in the beginning of the three and thirtieth year of *Herod's* reign in *Jury*; which was four years and more before his death. And from the beginning of the world, as *some account, five thousand, one hundred and ninety nine: and as others, four thousand and eighty nine. For in this point between the *Hebrews* and *Grecians*, there is a considerable difference concerning their reckoning.

The first consideration. The time appointed.

*See *Euseb. in Chron.*

The state of the world at Jesus's nativity was this: the three monarchies of the *Assyrians*, *Persians*, and *Grecians*, were past over and ended: and the *Romans* were entred into the fourth, that was greater than any of the rest, according to the prophecy of *Daniel*, five hundred years before *Octavius Cæsar*, surnamed *Augustus*; who after five civil wars by himself waged, and after infinite broils and bloodshed in the world, reigned peaceably alone for many years together: and in token of an universal peace over all the earth, he caused the

The general state of the world at Christ's coming.

Sueton. Tran. & Autel. viii. & al. in vita Aug.

K

temple

temple gates of JANUS to be shut, according to the custom of the *Romans* in such cases : altho' this had happened but twice before, from the building of *Rome* unto that time. And the very same day that Christ was born in *Jury*, *Augustus* commanded in *Rome*, * as afterwards was observed, that no man should call him LORD, thereby to signify the free liberty, rest, joy, and security, wherein all men were, after so long miseries, which by continual wars the world had suffered.

* *Oros.* l. 7.
hist. c. 22.

The first
proof. The
Roman mo-
narchy.
Dan. 2. 31,
34, 44.

By this we gather first, that this time of Jesus's birth agreed exactly with the prophecy so long before set down in *Daniel*, who lived in the first monarchy, that after his time, there should be three monarchies more, and the last biggest of all ; at whose appearing the Messias should come, and build up God's kingdom throughout the world.

The se-
cond proof.
The peace
of all the
world. *Isa.*
9. 6, 7. and
ch. 32. 18.
Psalms 71.

Secondly, we see that fulfilled, which *Isaiah*, above a hundred years before *Daniel*, foretold : that at the coming of Christ : *People should sit in the beauty of peace.* And again : *There shall be no end of peace.* And yet further : *He shall be prince of peace.* And king *David* long before him again : *In his days there shall rise justice, and abundance of peace.* Which thing, tho' especially to be understood of the internal peace and tranquillity of our minds and souls ; yet, considering that external peace also was necessary for a time, for the quiet planting and publishing of Christ's gospel ; and seeing the same brought to pass most miraculously upon the sudden, when, in reason, men least might expect the same, for the infinite wars wherein the world a little before had been ; and by reason of the *Roman* monarchy so freshly established ; which in their beginnings are wont to be troublesome : this peace, I say, cannot but be a great argument, that this was the proper time of the Messias's coming : and this for the state of the world in general.

The third
proof.
The scer-
pter of *Ju-
dah.*

But now for the particular state of *Jury*, at Jesus's nativity ; thus it was : according as *Josephus* the Jew, (who

(who was born within five years after Christ's passion) describes it. One *Herod* a stranger (whose father called * *Antipater*, came out of *Idumæa*) was risen to acquaintance and favour with the *Romans*, partly by his said father's means, who was, as *Josephus's* words are, *a well monied man, industrious and factious*: and partly also by his own diligence and ambition, being of himself both witty, beautiful, and of excellent rare qualities. By which commendations he came at length to marry the daughter of *Hyrchanus* king of *Jury*, that was descended lineally of the house of *David*, and tribe of *Judab*. And by this marriage obtained of his father-in-law, to be governor of the province of *Galilee*, under him. But *Hyrchanus*, afterwards falling into the hands of the *Parthians*, that carried him into *Parthia*; *Herod* ran away to *Rome*, and there, by the help and special favour of *Anthony*, that ruled in company together with *Octavius*, he obtained to be created king of *Jury*, without all title or interest in the world. For not only his said father-in-law *Hyrchanus* was yet alive in *Parthia*; but also his younger brother *Aristobulus*; and three of his sons, named *Antigonus*, *Alexander*, and *Aristobulus*; and divers others of the blood royal in *Jury*.

Herod then having procured by these means to be king of *Jury*, procured first to have in his hands the foresaid king *Hyrchanus*; and so put him to death: as also he brought to the same end his younger brother *Aristobulus*, together with all his three sons. He put to death also his own wife *Mariamnes*, that was king *Hyrchanus's* daughter; as also *Alexandra* her mother: and soon after, two of his own sons by the said *Mariamnes*, because they were of the blood royal of *Judab*. And a little after that again, he put to death his third son named *Antipater*. He caused to be slain, at one time, forty of the chiefest noble men of the tribe of *Judab*. And as *Philo* the *Jew* writes, that lived at the same time with him, he put to death all the *Sanhedrin*, that is, the seventy two senators of the tribe of *Judab*, that

* His grandfa-ther was a sexton in *Apollo's* temple, and his father was brought up among thieves in *Idumæa*. *Euseb. l. 1. cap. 6. ex Africano. Joseph. l. 14. antiq. c. 2.* The first rising of *Herod Ascalonita*.

Joseph. l. 15. ant. c. 9. 11 The most horrible murders committed by *Herod*. *l. 17. c. 10. lib. 15. c. 11 Phil. lib. de tempore.*

ruled the people. He killed the chief of the sect of *Pharisees*. He burned the genealogies of all the kings and princes of the house of *Judah*; and caused one *Nicholas Damascenus* an historiographer, that was his servant, to draw out a pedigree for him and his line, as though he had descended from the ancient kings of *Judah*. He translated the high priesthood, and sold it to strangers. And finally, he so rased, dispersed, and mangled the house of *Judah*, as nothing of government, dignity, or principality remained. And when he had done all this, then was *Jesus*, of the same house and line, born in *Bethlehem*, the proper City of *David*; which *David*, was the first founder and first author of regality in the tribe of *Judah*.

A pattern
of an am-
bitious ty-
rant.

The pro-
phesy of
Jacob
touching
the scepter
of *Judah*.
Gen. 49.

That the
scepter ne-
ver failed
in *Judah*,
until *Herod*
came.

1 *Reg.* 16.
4 *Reg.* 29.
Jere. 37,
Thal. in
tract. Sanh
cap. Dinel
Mammo-
noth. Rab.
Moses Eryp.
præfat.
Malmemonim

Now then, consider the prophecy of *Jacob*, concern-
ing the particular time of Christ's appearance, almost
two thousand years before these things fell out. *Come
hither my children*, says he, *that I may tell you the things
which are to happen in the latter days, &c. The scepter
shall not be taken from Judah, until he come, who is to
be sent; and he shall be the expectation of nations.* Which
prophecy that it was fulfilled now at Christ's nativity,
when *Herod* had extinguished all government in *Judah*,
no man can deny, that will acknowledge the things set
down before, which are recorded by writers both of that
time, and of the *Jewish* nation and religion. And that
it never was fulfilled from *David's* days, who began
the government in the house of *Judah*, until this time;
appears plainly by all histories, and records both divine
and prophane. For that from *David*, who was the first
king, unto *Zedechias*, that was the last, and died in
the captivity of *Babylon*; the scripture shews how all
kings descended of the house of *Judah*. And during
the time of the captivity in *Babylon*, which was seventy
years, the *Jews* were always permitted to choose to
themselves a governor of the house of *Judah*, whom
they called *RESCHGALUTA*. And after their
delivery from *Babylon*, *Zorobabel* of the same tribe was
their

their captain; and so others after him, until you come to the *Macchabees*, who were both captains and priests, for that they were by the mothers side of the tribe of *Judah*, and by the fathers side of the tribe of *Levi*, as Rabbi *Kimbi* holds. And from these men down to *Hyrchanus*, and *Aristobulus*, whom *Herod* slew, there continued still the same line, as *Josephus* declares. So by this prophecy it is evident, that *Jesus* was born at the proper time appointed for the *Messias*, when there was neither king, nor councillor, nor any one governor of the house and tribe of *Judah* left in *Jury*.

Esd. 1. 1.
c. 1, 2, 3.
Mac. 1. 1.
cap. 2. 3.
Rabbi.
Kimbi
com. in *Ag.*
Joseph. 1.
13. & 14.
ant.

Another prophecy there is, no less evident than the former wherein it is affirmed, that the *Messias* shall come before the second temple of *Jerusalem* (that was builded by *Zorobabel*, after the *Jews* return from their captivity in *Babylon*) should be destroyed by the *Romans*. For better understanding whereof, it is to be noted, that the temple of *Jerusalem* was builded twice, first by *Solomon*, which lasted about four hundred and forty two years; and then it was burned and destroyed by *Nebuchodonosor* king of *Babylon*. Wherefore, about seventy years after, it was builded again by *Zorobabel*, who reduced the *Jews* from *Babylon*, and so it continued, until it was destroyed the second time by *Titus* son to *Vespasian* the *Roman* emperor, about forty years after *Christ's* ascension. At what time, it had lasted from *Zorobabel*, almost six hundred years: and from *Solomon*, above a thousand.

The fourth
proof.
The destruction of
the second
temple.
3 *Reg.* c. 8.
& 7.
2. *Para.* 3.
Euseb. in
Chron.
Clem. 1. 1.
from.
4 *Reg.* 25.
1 *Esd.* 5. 3.
4.

And as in time of the second building, the people of *Israel* were poor, and much afflicted in respect of their late long banishment (tho' much assisted to this work by the liberality and munificency of *Darius* king of *Babylon*) so was the building and workmanship of this second temple, nothing comparable for excellency, to the first building of *Solomon*, when the *Jews* were in the flower of their riches. This testifies *Aggeus* the prophet, who was one of the builders; and he testifies the same to *Zorobabel*, and the rest of those that were with him, by

1. *Esd.* 5. 6.
The building of the
second
temple,
let's sumptuous than
the first.
1 *Esd.* 5.

Agg. 2. 4. God's own appointment, in these words. *The word of God was made to Aggeus the prophet. Tell Zorobabel the son of Salathiel captain of Judah, and Jesus the son of Josedech high-priest, and the rest of the people. Who is there left of you, that saw this temple in his first glory (before our transmigration) and what say you to this, which now we see? is it not in our eyes, as though it were not? that is, is it not, as though it were nothing, in comparison of the former temple, which Solomon builded?*

Agg. 2. Thus said *Aggeus* by God's commission, of the material building of the second temple. And yet, to comfort the *Jews* withal, he was commanded presently in the same chapter, to say thus. *Comfort thy self Zorobabel, and comfort thy self Jesus son of Josedech high-priest, and comfort your selves all ye people of the earth, saith the Lord of Hosts: do ye the things which I covenanted with you, when ye came forth of the land of Ægypt, and fear not; for that my spirit shall be among you: thus saith the Lord of Hosts; * a little time yet remains, when I will move both heaven and earth, both sea and land, with all countries in the world. And then shall come the DESIRED OF ALL NATIONS and I will fill this house (or temple) with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. Silver is mine, and gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts: great shall be the glory of this last house or temple, more than of the first, saith the Lord God of Hosts.* Hitherto are the words of God by *Aggeus*, and the often repetition, of the *Lord God of Hosts*, is to signify the certainty and great weight of the matter promised.

* This he says for that the three monarchies issued, wherein there was continual war and bloodshed.

1 Esd. 3. Now consider, that whereas God had said immediately before, that this second temple was nothing in respect of the first, for pomp and riches of the material building (which the old men in the book of *Esdra*s did testify, by their weeping, when they saw this second, and remembered the first) yet now God says, that *gold and silver is his own* (as though he made no account of the abundance thereof in the former temple, or of the want of the same, in this) and that, notwithstanding

standing the poverty of this second building; yet shall it be filled and replenished with glory, and that in such sort, as it shall far pass in glory the former; and that shall be (as both here is expressed, and elsewhere most plainly) by the coming of Christ into the second temple, which shall be a greater dignity, than any dignity whatsoever was found in the first building of *Solomon's* temple.

Concerning which point, it is to be considered, that the learned *Jews*, besides the material difference of building before mentioned, do note five things, of great importance to have been wanting in the second temple, which were in the first. To wit, the fire sent from heaven to burn the holocausts; the glory of God (or Angels) appearing among the Cherubins, that stood in the temple: the manifest inspiration of God's spirit upon prophets, for the prophecy failed in the second temple: the presence of the Ark: and last of all, the *Urim* and *Thumim*. All which great wants and differences notwithstanding, God says, as you see, that the glory of this second temple shall be much greater, than the first, by the coming of Christ into it. Which thing, *Malachi* the prophet, that lived at the same time when the second temple was building, confirms yet more expressly in these words. *Behold I send my Angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face. And straight after, shall come to his temple, the lord or ruler, whom you seek, and the MESSENGER OF THE TESTAMENT, whom you desire. Behold he cometh saith the Lord of Hosts, and who can imagine the day of his coming? or who can stand or abide to see him? for he shall be as a purging fire.*

By all which is made evident, that Christ must come and appear in the second temple before it be destroyed; as Jesus did: and therefore he cannot be now to come, seeing the said temple was destroyed, above fifteen hundred years past, by the *Romans*, as hath been said. Which destruction and final desolation, was prophecied by *Daniel* to ensue, soon after the birth and death of Christ, in these words. *After sixty two hebdomades, Christ shall be*

This was fulfilled when Christ was personally, and taught in the temple. *Luke 1. 2. 19. Mat. 21. 26. &c.* Prerogatives of the first temple. *Rab. Samuel tract. Sanhedri. Thalm. Hierosol. Rab. Abr. in l. dicrum.*

Mal. 3. This Christ interpreted of *St. John Baptist.* *Mat. 11.*

Dan. 9.
The second
temple to
be destroy-
ed present-
ly after
Christ's
passion.

Joseph. de.
bello Ju-
daico. l. 6.

The fifth
proof.
The seven-
ty two heb-
domades.

Two kinds
of weeks.

Lev. 25.
vid. etiam,
c. 23. & a-
libi pas-
sim.

Lib. 1. c.
2.

slain; and a people with their captain to come, shall destroy the city, and sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be vastity or spoil. And after the war ended, there shall ensue the appointed desolation. Which prophecy to have fallen out literally, about forty years after Jesus was put to death, when *Jerusalem* was destroyed, and the temple overthrown by *Titus*: the story of *Josephus* the learned Jew, who was a captain against *Titus* in that war, does manifestly, and at large declare.

And for that we have made mention here, of *Daniel's* prophecy, concerning the particular time of Christ's coming, and his death, which confirms the matter we treat, so perspicuously, that nothing can be said more evident; it shall not be amiss, to examine the same, before we pass any further. For better conceiving whereof, it is to be understood, that this *Greek* word *hebdomada*, signifying seven, doth sometime import a week of seven days, according to our common use; and then it is called in scripture *hebdomada dierum*, a week of days; as *Dan. x. 2.* where *Daniel* says that he did mourn three weeks of days. But at other times, it signifies the space of seven years, and is called in Scripture *Hebdomada annorum*, a week of years. As in *Leviticus*, where it is said: 'thou shalt number to thee seven weeks of years, that is seven times seven, which make forty nine years.'

Now then it is certain, that *Daniel* in the prophecy before alledged, where he assigns sixty two weeks to the time of Christ's death, could not mean *weeks of days*; for that he appoints only seven weeks, to the rebuilding of the city of *Jerusalem*, of the temple, and of the walls about; which were not ended but in forty nine years after, as may be gathered by the books of *Esdras*; which forty nine years, do make just seven weeks of years. And therefore it is certain, that such *hebdomades* of years are meant here by *Daniel* in all the prophecy.

First then, when the Angel came to comfort him, and to open unto him secrets for the time to come; he said these words. *Mark my speech, and understand the vision.*
The

The seventy hebdomades (or weeks) are shortned or hastened upon thy people, and upon the holy city; to the end all prevarication and sin may take an end, and iniquity be blotted out, and everlasting justice be brought in place thereof; to the end that vision, and prophecies may be fulfilled, and the HOLY OF HOLIES may be anointed. Dan. 9. 23. Jer. 25.

In which words it seems that the Angel did allude, by naming seventy, unto the seventy years of captivity, prophesied by *Jeremiah*; after which ended, the people should be delivered from their temporal bondage in *Babylon*. And therefore *Daniel*, now being in that place, and perceiving the same time to be expired, prayed to God with great instance, to fulfill his promise made by *Jeremiah*. Whereto the Angel answered, that it should be done. And as, after the expiration of seventy years, God was now to deliver them from the bodily captivity of *Babylon*: so was he also, after seventy hebdomades more, to deliver them from bondage of sin and prevarication; and that by the anointed *Messias*, which is indeed *the Holy of Holies*. 29. Why the Angel nameth seventy hebdomades in this place.

This, I say, may be the reason of naming seventy hebdomades, thereby to allude to the number of the seventy years of that *Babylonical* servitude. For, immediately after, the Angel appoints the whole exact number to be threescore and nine hebdomades; that is, seven to the building of the city, and temple; and threescore and two, from that to the death of Christ, in these words. *Know thou and mark, that from the end of this speech, to the time that Jerusalem shall be builded, and unto Christ the captain, there shall be hebdomades seven, and hebdomades sixty two; and the streets and walls (of Jerusalem) shall be builded again though with much difficulty of the times: and after sixty and two hebdomades, Christ shall be slain. And the people that shall deny him, shall not be his, &c. And then unto consummation and end, shall persevere desolation.* Dan. 9. 25. The exact number of weeks, from the building of the second temple to the death of Christ, 62.

Now then, if we put these years together, which are here mentioned by *Daniel*: that is, first the seven hebdomades,

The account of
Daniel's
weeks.

domades, which make forty nine years; and then the threescore and two from the restauration of *Jerusalem*, which make four hundred thirty four more; we shall find the whole number to be four hundred eighty three years. Which being begun from the first year of *Cyrus*, as some will; because he first determined the *Jews* reduction: or from the second year of *Darius*, as others will; for he confirmed and put the same in execution: or from the twentieth year of the said *Darius*, for that then he made a new edict in the favour of *Nehemias*, and sent him into *Jury*: every way they will end in the reign of *Herod*, and of *Augustus*, under whom Christ was born; or in the reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*, under whom he suffered. And by no interpretation in the world, can it be avoided, but that this time appointed by *Daniel*, is now out, above a thousand and five hundred years past, while yet the temple stood, and was not put to desolation. And therefore of necessity Christ must be come about that time, and never more hereafter to be looked for.

The sixth
proof.
The tradi-
tions of
Rabbins.

Thalm.
Sra. sanbe.
cap. kelec.
& alibi.

Thalm. in
tract. avo-
dazara.

Isa. 9. 6.
An obser-
vation of
the *Caba-*
list.

The traditions and observations of the old *Jews* themselves, do marvellously confirm this belief of ours; for they all did run to this one point, that about the time of *Augustus's* reign, wherein Jesus was born, the Messias should appear. It is often repeated in the *Thalmud*; that one *Elias* left this tradition, that the world should endure six thousand years; two thousand before the law of *Moses*; two thousand under the same law, and two thousand after that, under the Messias. Which last two thousand years, by all computation, could not begin much from the birth of Jesus. And the *Rabbins* a great while ago, complained in their *Thalmud*, that there seemed to them in those days seven hundred and fourteen years past, since Christ by the scriptures should have appeared; and therefore they do admire, why God so long defers the same.

Another observation they have upon the words of *Isaiah*; *Parvulus natus est nobis*, a little child is born unto

unto us. In which words, as they find the *Hebrew* letter *Mem*, to be shut in the midst of a word (which is strange in that tongue: for *Mem* is wont to be open in the midst of words, and shut only in the end) they gather many secrets. And among others, that since *Mem* signifies six hundred years; so long it should be after *Isaiab*, until the time of Christ. Which account of theirs falls out so just, that if you reckon the years from *Achaz* king of *Judab*, in whose time *Isaiab* spoke these words, until the time of king *Herod*, under whom Christ was born: you shall perceive the number to fail little or nothing.

Thal. in l. Sab. & in tract. Sanhedrin. Isaiab 7. Mat. 2.

A much like observation hath Rabbi *Moses* the son of *Maimon* (whom the *Jews* do hold in extreme great reverence, calling him *the doctor of justice*) in his epistle to his countrymen of *Africa*, concerning the time of Christ's appearance. Which he thinks to be past, according to the scriptures above a thousand years, in his days: (he lived about the year of Christ one thousand one hundred and forty) but that God defers his manifestation for their sins. To which purpose also appertains the tradition of one *Elias* (as Rabbi *Joshua* reports it in the *Thalmud*) that the *Messias* was to be born indeed, according to the scriptures, before the destruction of the second temple; for that *Isaiab* says of the synagogue: *before she was with child she brought forth; and before the grief of travail came, she was delivered of a man child.* That is, says he, before the synagogue was afflicted and put to desolation by the *Romans*, she brought forth the *Messias*. But yet says he, this *Messias* for our sins, does hide himself for a time in the sea, and other desert places, until we be worthy of his coming.

The observation of *R. Moses. R. Mof. Ben. Maimon. ep. ad Judæos African.*

R. Joshua Ben. Levi. in Thal. tract. Sanhed. c. helec. Isa. 66. 7.

Christ hides himself in the sea.

To the like effect, is the observation of the *Thalmud* itself, and of divers Rabbins therein, concerning the wicked manners of men that should be at Christ's appearance upon earth; of whom they do pronounce these words. *The wise men in Israel, shall be extinguished: the learning of our scribes and pharisees shall be*

The observation of the *Thalmud.*

Thalm. tra. San. c. hel. Rab. Jaba. be

R. Juda. be putrified, the schools of divinity shall be stews at that time.
R. Nehot. Which thing *Josephus*, that lived in the same age with
&c. Josep. Christ, affirms to be fulfilled in the time of *Herod*; in-
l. 20. ant. somuch that, if the *Romans* had not destroyed them,
cap. 6. & without doubt, says he, either the earth would have
8. & l. 6. opened and swallowed them down; or else fire from
de bello heaven would have consumed them.
Jud. 15. &

l. 7. c. 9. All then runs to this end, both by scripture, tradi-
 The seventh proof. tion, observation, and instinct of God himself; that,
 Foreboding. about *Herod's* time, the true *Messias* should be born.
Tacit. l. 21. And hereof came that common and publick fame that
Sueton. in is reported by *Tacitus*, *Suetonius*, and *Josephus*, which
vita Vesp. was also written in open sight, upon the chiefest tower
Joseph. de of the city of *Jerusalem*: that out of *Jury* should rise,
bello Juda *A general lord of the universal world.* Which prophecy
l. 7. c. 12. as the *Romans* either contemned, or turned another way,
 applying the same afterwards to *Vespasian*; so the *Jews*
 understood it of their *Messias*; and *Herod* feared the
 matter greatly, and therefore was so watchful to extin-
 guish the line of *David*, as has been shewed.

The eighth proof. Hence also it did proceed, that the *Magi*, or wise men of
 The general expectation of the people. the East, attended so diligently about that time, to ex-
 pect the star that *Balaam* had promised at the coming of
 this king. Hence also it was, that the whole people
 of *Jury*, remained so attentive at this time, more than
 ever before or since, in expecting the *Messias*. Where-

John 1. upon, as soon as ever they heard of *John Baptist* in the
 desert, they ran unto him, asking if he were Christ?
 as afterwards also they flocked to *Jesus*, demanding,
Art thou he which is to come, or do we expect another?
 which words import, the great expectation wherein
 that people remained in those days. Neither was that
 expectation wanting in the chief governors themselves, as
 may appear by that speech of theirs to *Jesus*: *How long*
John 10. *wilt thou kill us, with this expectation, if thou be Christ,*
tell us plainly.

Divers false Christs did rise in *Jury* Of which fame, expectation, and greedy desire of
 the people, divers deceivers took occasion to call them-
 selves

selves the Messias in those days, and the people followed
 them presently ; which had not happened in any age be-
 fore. And among others, there is named one *Judas* Acts 5.
Gaulonites, or *Galileus*, as *St. Luke* calleth him : and Josep. l. 17.
 another *Judas*, the son of *Ezechias* ; both of them very c. 8. & l. 18.
 wicked, and licentious fellows. One also called *Atonges*, c. 1. & 2.
 a shepherd : and two others, named *Theudus*, and *E-* & l. 20.
gyptius, most notable deceivers. And above all, there c. 2. 6.
 was one *Barcozbam*, who as the *Tbalmud* says, for Thal. tract.
 thirty years together, was received for the Messias, by Sanh. cap.
 the Rabbins themselves ; until at last they slew him, belec. Rab.
 because he was not able to deliver them from the Ro- Mos. Ben.
 mans. Which facility in the people, when *Herod* saw, Maim. in
 he caused *Nicolaus Damascenus*, as I noted before, to Sententiis.
 devise a pedigree for him from the ancient kings of Nicol. Da-
Judab ; and so he, as well as others, took upon him to masceenas,
 be the Messias, whom divers carnal *Jews*, that expected Josep. l. 14.
 the Messias to be a magnificent king, as *Herod* was, antiq. c. 2.
 would seem to believe, and divulge abroad, and there-
 fore in the gospel, they are thought to have been called Mat. 22.
Herodiani ; that is, *Herodians*, or followers of *Herod*, Mark 3, 12
 who came to tempt Christ, with the scribes and pharisees.

Wherefore, to conclude at length this weighty point, The con-
 of the time of Christ's appearing ; seeing that about the clusion of
 birth of *Jesus* under *Herod's* reign, there concurr'd so this first
 many signs, and arguments together ; as the general considera-
 peace of the *Roman* empire ; the defection of the line tion of the
 and Regiment of *Judab* ; the open decay of the second time.
 temple ; the just calculation of *Daniel's* *hebdomades* ;
 the attestation of oracles ; the observation of Rabbins ;
 the publick fame and expectation of all the *Jews* ; to-
 gether with the palpable experience of more than fifteen
 hundred years past, since *Jesus* appeared, wherein we see
 the *Jewish* people, in vain to expect another Messias, they
 being dispersed over all the world, without temple, law,
 sacrifice, prophet, or promise for their redemption (which
 never hapened to them, until after *Jesus's* death ; for
 in all other their banishments, captivities, and afflicti-
 ons,

ons, they had some prophecy, consolation, or promise, for their delivery) all these things I say, considered, and put together, we may most undoubtedly and assuredly conclude, that Jesus was born at the just time appointed, and foretold by God's holy spirit; and consequently, that he was the only true Messias, and Saviour of the world; which yet shall better appear by examination of other things, that are to follow.

The second
considera-
tion.
Christ's
birth.

In the second consideration, there comes to be weighed these points following: the line and stock of Jesus; his manner of conception; the place of his birth; his circumcision, and name; his adoration by the *Magi*; his presentation in the temple; and his flight to *Ægypt*.

I.
Jesus's line

For his line and stock, there was never man denied or doubted, but that Jesus was directly of the tribe of *Judab*, and descended lineally by his mother of the peculiar house of *David* (* according as it was foretold, that the Messias should do) which is proved most clearly by the two genealogies and pedigrees, set down by *St. Matthew*, and *St. Luke*, of the blessed virgin's whole descent from *David* to *Joseph*, who was of the same tribe and kindred with her. And it is confirmed by their repairing to *Bethlehem*, when proclamation was made by † *Cyrinius* in *Augustus's* name, that every person should repair to the head city of their tribe and family, to be censured for their tribute; seeing that *Bethlehem* was the proper city only of them, that were of the house and line of *David*, king *David* being born therein. And finally, it is evident, because the scribes and pharisees, who objected matters of much less importance against Jesus, than this (as, that he was a carpenter's son, thereby to debase him for his poverty) yet never objected they against him, that he was not of the house of *David*. Which they would never have omitted, if they might have done it with any colour; for it would have weighed more against him than all the rest; and would have, in one word, dispatched the whole controversy. Nay, I add further, that it remains registred

in

* 3 Reg. 7.
Psalms 80.
Isaiah 11.
Mat. 1.
Luke 3.

† Of this
matter
writes *Jos.*
1. 18. c. 1.
ant.

1 Reg. 17.
2 Reg. 2.

Mat. 13.
Luke 6.

in the *Jews Thalmud* itself, that *Jesus of Nazareth crucified, was of the blood royal from Zorobabel, of the house of David.* *Thal. tract. Sanh. Nig. mah. had.*

For the manner of his conception, and of the message or annunciation made unto his mother by the Angel, tho' it depend principally upon the relation and credit of the virgin herself, who only was privy thereunto; and upon the testimony of *Joseph*, to whom it was revealed by the same Angel afterwards: yet he that shall consider the circumstances of the thing itself: as first the simplicity of both the reporters; then, how that it is not likely, that *Joseph* being just, as he is described, would have concealed a thing so much against himself, and against the law, if he had not some way been assured of the truth. Thirdly, the innocent age of the blessed virgin, who was not past fourteen years old at that time, as *St. Augustine*, and other ancient fathers do prove by manifest arguments: all these things, I say, do make it improbable, that she would invent such a matter of herself. And finally, the strange prophecy, which she uttered in her canticle of *MAGNIFICAT*, and which we see now fulfilled, tho' at that time very unlikely; to wit: *That all generations should call her BLESSED.* These circumstances, he that shall consider, cannot but see, that the matter must needs be true.

And as for the kind and manner of his nativity, most manifest it is by scripture, that the *Messias* was appointed to be born of a virgin; for so says *Isaiab* plainly: *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a son.* And *Isaiab* appoints this to king *Achaz*, for a wonderful and strange sign from God. Which he could not have done in reason, if the *Hebrew* word in that place might have signified a young woman only, as some later Rabbins will affirm; for that it is no sign nor strange thing, but very common and ordinary for young women to conceive, and bring forth children. Wherefore the *septuagint* do very well translate it in the *Greek*,
by

H.
The manner of his conception.
Luke 1.

Mat. 1.

August. l. 4. de Trin. c. 5. & l. con. Judæos, c. 5. Chrysost. in c. 1. Luke

III.
The manner of Jesus his nativity.
Isa. 7.

Parthenos
Rabbi Si-
meon, Ben.
Johal, n.c.
2 Gen. R.
Mos. Ha-
dar. in
Psa. 84. 12.

by the proper name of *Virgin*; and so also did the elder *Jews* understand it, as *Rabbi Simeon* well notes. And *Rabbi Moses Hadarsan* of singular credit with the *Jews*, upon these words of the *Psalms*: *Truth shall bud forth of the earth*, &c. says thus. Here *Rabbi Joden* notes, that it is not said: *Truth shall be engendered of the earth*, but: *truth shall bud forth*; to signify thereby, that the *Messias*, who is meant by the word *Truth*, shall not be begotten, as other men are, in carnal copulation. Thus far *Rabbi Moses*, who in another place, that is, upon the twenty fifth chapter of *Genesis*, alledges *Rabbi Berachias* to be of the same opinion, and to prove it out of the 109th *Psalms*, ver. 4.

Jere. 31.
22.

The same is proved also by the plain words of *Jeremiah*: *God hath created a new thing upon earth, a woman shall environ (or inclose) a man*. That is, she shall inclose him in her womb, and bring him forth, after a new and strange manner, without generation of man.

Rab. Ha-
cad. quæst.
3, in Ea.
cap. 9.

And finally, *Rabbi Hacadosch* proves by *Cabala*, out of many places of scripture; not only that the mother of the *Messias* shall be a virgin; but also that her name shall be *Mary*. All the ten *Sibyls*, in like manner, according

Betuleius
in l. de car.
Sibyl.

as *Betuleius* sets out their prophecies, do make special mention of the mother of the *Messias*, that she should be a most pure and holy virgin: so that this matter was revealed very clearly, both to *Jew*, and *Gentile*, before it came to pass. And *Clem. Alexandrinus* writes, that *Simon Magus*, to the end he might not seem inferior to *Jesus* in this point, feigned that he was also born of a virgin, as *Jesus* was.

Clem. in
recognit.

IV.
 The place
 appointed
 for the
 birth of the
Messias.
Mich. 5.

That *Bethlehem* where *Christ* was born, was the peculiar place preordained by God for the birth of the *Messias*, the prophet *Micheas* foretold plainly, when he uttered, divers ages before *Christ* was incarnate, these words. *And thou Bethlehem Ephrata, art but a little one in respect of thousands in Judah: and yet shall there come forth of thee, one that shall be the RULER of Israel; and his coming forth is from the beginning, and*

FROM

FROM THE DAYS OF ETERNITY. By which words is plainly expressed, that tho' *Bethlehem* were but a little poor town, as indeed it was, in comparision of many others in *Judah*; yet therein should be born temporally that governor of *Israel*, whose divine birth was before the world's foundation, and from all eternity. And so do interpret this place, both *Jonathan Ben Uziel*, the great author of the *Chaldee* paraphrase, who died twenty eight years before Christ was born; and also Rabbi *Selomoh*, and *Hacadofch* in their commentaries upon this place of *Micheas*.

The same thing foretold *David* of *Ephrata* or *Bethlehem*, for both names do signify one thing, as appears by the former place of *Micheas*, and others, * when talking of the Messias, and being desirous to know where he should be born, he says: *I will not go into the tabernacle of my house, nor into my bed; nor will I give mine eyes sleep, or rest to the temples of the head; until I find out the place that is appointed for my Lord; the tabernacle or house, for the God of Jacob.* And then, the mystery being revealed unto him, he says presently: *Behold, we have heard of it now in Ephrata (or Bethlehem) we have found it out in the fields † of wood.* And to shew how he revered the place for that cause, he adds immediately: *We will adore in the place where his feet have stood.* Whereby he prophecies, not only the adoration used after in that place unto Jesus by the *Magi*, or three kings of the East; but also of all other adoration used in the same place in the memory of Jesus, by other devout christians until this day. For which respect *Origen* says; that the place of *Bethlehem* was most famous and renowned in his days.

* Gen. 35.
& 48.
1 Para. 2.
Psal. 131.

† This he says, for that in *David's* time *Bethlehem* stood nigh unto woods.
Mat. 2.
Orig. cont.
Cels.

As for the Angels appearing to the shepherds in the night of the nativity, there can be no more said, but the credit, honesty, and simplicity of them that reported it: and likely it is, they would never feign a thing, that might have been refuted by testimony of the shepherds themselves, if it had been false.

V.
The Angels
singing.

VI.
The name
JESUS.

4 *Esd.* 7.

Rab. Hac.
in *Iſa.* 9.
Gen. 49.
& *Pſalm*
71, & 95.
Note this
reaſon.

Of the name of JESUS, given to him in his circumciſion; it was to be ſeen ſet down in a book, that howſoever it were not ſcripture, yet was it extant in the world before Chriſt was born. I mean the fourth book of *Eſdras*, which has theſe words in the perſon of God the Father: *Behold the time ſhall come, when the ſigns ſhall appear that I have told, &c. And my ſon JESUS, ſhall be revealed with theſe who are with him, &c. And after thoſe years my ſon CHRIST ſhall die; and the earth ſhall render thoſe, that ſleep therein.* Rabbi *Hacadoſch* alſo proveth by art *Cabaliſt*, out of many places and texts of ſcriptures, that the Meſſias name, at his coming, ſhall be JESUS. And among others, he adds this reaſon: that as the name of him, who firſt brought the *Jews* out of bondage into the land of promiſe was *Jeſus* or *Joſhua*, which is all one: ſo muſt his name be *Jeſus*, that ſhall the ſecond time deliver them from the bondage wherein they are, and reſtore them to their old and ancient poſſeſſion of *Jury*, which is the chief benefit they expect by the Meſſias.

Finally, it is not probable that the virgin *Mary* ſhould feign this name of her ſelf; for among the *Jews* there were many other names of more honour and eſtimation at that time: as, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, *Moſes*, and *David*. And therefore, if ſhe would have feigned any, it is like ſhe would have taken one of them, as ſoon as this, which had not been the name of any great Patriarch.

VII.
The coming
of the
three kings
Mat. 2.
Cypr. ſet.
de Bap. &
idem Tert.
l. 3. con.
Marcion
Hillar. l.
4. de Trin.
Joſh. 12.

There follows the coming of the three *Magi*, or wiſe men from the Eaſt; of whom *St. Cyprian's* words are: *It is an old tradition of the Church, that the Magi of the Eaſt, were kings, or rather little lords of particular places.* Which is to be underſtood, ſuch little kings, as *Joſhua* ſlew thirty in one battle. And it is to be noted, that *St. Matthew* makes mention of the coming of theſe kings to *Jeruſalem*, as of a known and publick matter, whereof all *Jeruſalem*, and *Jury* was able to bear him witneſs. For he talks of their open coming

coming to *Jerusalem*; and of their inquiry for the new born king; of their speech and conference had with *Herod*; as also of *Herod's* consultation with the scribes, and pharisees, about the place of the *Messias's* birth. And finally, he shews the most barbarous murder that ensued of almost * infinite infants, in all the circuit of *Bethlehem*, for this matter. Which could not be a thing unknown to all *Jury*, and much less feigned by *St. Matthew*; for he should have given his adversaries the greatest advantage in the world, if he had begun his Gospel with so notorious and open an untruth, which might have been refuted by infinite persons, that were yet alive.

Epiphanius is of opinion, that these kings arrived in *Jerusalem* two years after Christ's nativity; for that *Herod* slew all infants of that age. But others hold more probably, that the star appeared unto them two years before Christ's nativity, so that they came to *Bethlehem*, the thirteenth day after Christ's birth, according as the church doth celebrate the *Epiphany*. *St. Basil* thinks, that they were learned men, and might by their learning and art-magick (wherein those countrymen at that time were very skilful) understand and feel, that the power of their heathen Gods was greatly diminished and broken. They might also be stirred up with that common bruit and general prophecy, spread over all the East in those days, as both *Suetonius* and *Josephus* do record: *That out of Jury should come an universal king over all the world.* By these means, I say, and by the prophecy of *Balaam*, left among them from *Moses* time (for he was a *Gentile*) whereby was signified, that a star should rise and declare a great and mighty king in *Israel*; they might be induced at the sight of this star, to take so long a journey as they did towards *Jury*.

This star, as I have said, was foretold by *Balaam*, a heathen prophet, above fifteen hundred years before it appeared. And after *Balaam* again, it was prophesied by *David*, that kings of *Arabia*, *Saba*, and other countries should come and adore Christ, and offer both

* Fourteen thousand, as says the liturgy of the *Ethiopians*, and *Calend. Græcorum.*

Eph. hæres 51.
Ammon. Alex. in Harm. Niceph. l. 1. c. 13.
Basil. ser. in nat. dom.

Suet. in Vespas. c. 4. Joseph. l. 7. de bel. c. 12.
Num. 24.

Prophecies of things that should fall out in *Bethlehem.*
Num. 24. Pj. 71. 10.

gold and other gifts unto him. The murther also of the infants of *Bethlehem* was presignified by *Jeremiab*, in the weeping of *Rachel*, for the slaughter of her children: which *Rachel* was buried in *Bethlehem*, and for that cause, those infants were called her children, tho' she was dead above two thousand years before *Jeremiab* wrote the prophecy. Amongst which infants, *Herod* also for more assurance, slew an infant of his own. For that, as *Philo* notes, he was descended by his mother of the line of *Judab*. Which cruelty coming to *Augustus's* ears, he said, as *Macrobius* reports, that he had rather be *Herod's* swine, than his son; for he being a Jew, was forbidden by his religion to kill his swine; though not ashamed to kill his son.

The same star, whereof we speak, is mentioned by divers heathen writers; as by *Pliny*, under the name of a comet (for so they termed all extraordinary stars) which appeared in the latter end of *Augustus's* days, and was far different from all others, that ever appeared. And therefore, contrary to the nature of those kind of stars, it was adjudged by the whole college of south-sayers, to portend universal good unto the earth; and for that cause, had an image of metal erected to it in *Rome*; and, as *Pliny's* words are, *Is Cometa unus, toto orbe colitur*: that only comet, is worshipped throughout the whole world.

Origen also writes of one *Cheremon* a stoick, that was much moved with the consideration of this star, and after the appearance thereof, he perceiving the power of his Gods decayed, took a journey into *Jury*, in company of other astronomers, to inform himself further of the matter. Whereunto *Chalcidius* a platonick doth add, that the chaldean astronomers did gather by contemplation of this star, that some God descended from heaven to the benefit of mankind. And finally, the *Sibyl's* talking of the coming of Christ, affirmed plainly, *Rutilans eum sidus monstrabit*, a blazing star shall declare him. Which prophecy *Virgil* the

the poet having read in *Augustus's* time, and soon after having seen the same fulfilled: applied it, as I shewed before of all the rest, to the flattering of *Cæsar*, and therefore he says in the place before alledged.

Ecce Dionæi processit Cæsaris astrum.

Eclog. 4.

Behold the star of *Cæsar* (descended of *Venus*) hath now appeared; which star indeed, was the star of *Cæsar's* Lord and Master.

After forty days past over, *St. Luke* reports; how Jesus by his mother was presented in the temple of *Jerusalem*; and therewithal recounts two strange things that happened at the same time: to wit, that two grave and reverend persons, *Simeon*, surnamed just: and *Anna* the prophetess (both of singular sanctity amongst the *Jews*) coming into the temple at the very time, when Jesus was there in his mother's arms; took notice of him, and acknowledged him publicly for the *Messias* and Saviour of the world. Foretelling also by the spirit of prophecy, divers particular things, that were to ensue, both to Christ and Christians, especially to his mother the blessed Virgin. Which things being published at that time, and confirmed afterwards by the event, do well declare, that this narration of *St. Luke*, could not be forged: as do also the number of particular circumstances set down about the time, place, and persons, most notoriously known to all *Jerusalem*. For, as for *Anna*, she had lived from her youth until fourscore years of age in the temple; and thereby was known to the most part of *Jury*. And as for *Simeon*, he was the scholar of the most famous *Hillel*, and condisciple to *Jonathan* maker of the *Chaldee* paraphrase, of whom I spoke before: and the *Jews Thalmud* does confess, that by the death of these two men (but especially of *Simeon*) failed the spirit of the great synagogue called *Sanhedrin*: which after the captivity of *Babylon*, until *Herod's* time, supplied, in a sort, the spirit of

Luke 12. 7.

The preservation of Jesus of Jerusalem

Anna the prophetess, Simeon. Thal. tract. pickci. Avoth.

Thal. tract. Joma. cap. Tereph. Gecalphi.

prophecy, that was expressly in *Israel* before the said captivity.

Christ's
flight into
Ægypt.
Luke 2.

Hosea. 11.
Isaiah 19.

Euseb. l. 6.
dem. c. 20.
Es l. 9. c. 2.
3, 4.

The bene-
fit that *Æ-*
gypt re-
ceived by
Christ's
flight unto
it.

Of Christ's flight into *Ægypt* for fear of *Herod*, St. *Luke* well notes, that it was prophesied by *Hosea* long before; *That God would call his son out of Ægypt*. And the prophet *Isaiah* describes the same very particularly, when he says: *Behold our Lord Jehovah, shall ascend up, or ride, upon a light cloud; which was his flesh or humanity; and shall go down into Ægypt; and all the idols of Ægypt shall shake at his presence*. Which latter point, *Eusebius* shews that it was fulfilled most evidently, in the sight of all the world: For no nation came to *Christian* religion with so great celerity, or with so great fervour, as did the *Ægyptians*, who threw down their idols before any other heathen nation. And as they had been in idolatry before other countries: so were they the first, by Christ's coming unto them, that afterwards gave example of true return to their Creator. It follows in *Isaiah*: *And I will give up Ægypt into the hands of cruel lords: and a potent king shall take dominion over them*. Which was fulfilled about the very time wherein Christ was to come. For then, after many spoils and cruelties exercised upon *Ægypt* by the *Roman* Lords and Princes, *Pompey*, *Cæsar*, *Anthony*, and others; in the end *Cleopatra* their Queen (that was the last of all the blood and line of the *Ptolomies*) was forced to slay herself: and so *Augustus* took possession of all *Ægypt*, and subjected it as a province, to the *Roman* empire.

But consider you how *Isaiah* concludes this matter, after all these temporal afflictions, threatned against *Ægypt*: and confess, that such adversity is no sign of God's disfavour, to them who receive it. For thus says God, after all his comminations. *In that day, there shall be an altar of Jehovah in the midst of Ægypt: they shall cry to God in their tribulation; and he shall send them a SAVIOUR, &c. Blessing shall be in the midst of the land, to whom our Lord God of Hosts hath given his benediction,*

benediction, saying : Blessed is my people of Ægypt. And here we make an end of our second consideration.

In the third place, there comes to be considered, according to our former division, the life, conversation, doctrine, and miracles of Jesus. And first, touching things done by him after his coming out of Ægypt (which might be about the sixth or seventh year of his age) until his baptism by St. John (which was the thirtieth) there is little recorded, either in prophane or ecclesiastical writers. For, as St. *Justine*, St. *Chrysostom*, St. *Augustine*, and others do write; he bestowed that time in the common exercises and labours of man's life: thereby to shew himself true man, and give demonstration how much he detested idleness.

The third consideration.
The life and actions of Jesus.

Jus. in Tripho. Chryf. in Johan. Aug. l. 4. de Trinit. c. 5.

Of St. *John Baptist*, all *Hebrew* writers of that time do make mention, with exceeding praise and admiration of his holiness: especially *Josephus*, that lived immediately after Christ's days, says: he was, *Vir optimus: Judæos excitans ad virtutum studia*. A most excellent man, stirring up the *Jews* to the exercise of virtue. He adds also, that partly for fear of the great concourse of people, which flocked unto him: and partly by the solicitation of *Herodias*, concubine and brother's wife to *Herod Antipas*, the great *Herod's* son (for whose sake he had turned off his own wife, daughter of *Aretas* king of the *Arabians*) he was apprehended, and imprisoned in the castle of *Acherun*, and therein, soon after, put to death. Which murder *Josephus* esteemed to be the cause of all the misery which ensued afterwards to *Herod*, and his whole family.

Of St *John Baptist*.

Josep. l. 12 antiq. c. 7.

Of this man it was written by *Malachi* the prophet: *Behold, I send my Angel, before me: and he shall prepare the way before my face; and presently shall come to his temple, the RULER whom you seek, and the ANGEL OF THE TESTAMENT whom you desire*. Which prophecy was fulfilled most evidently, when upon the preaching of St. *John*, Christ came unto him: and tho' St. *John* had never seen him before; yet

Malachi 3

St. *John's* behaviour towards Christ.

he acknowledged him for the Messias, in the presence of infinite people : and his acknowledgment was confirmed by the visible descending of a dove and voice from heaven, in the sight, and hearing of all the people present ; according as three of our Evangelists do report. Which they would never have presumed to do ; had not the matter been most evident, and without all compass of denial or contradiction.

And truly, no one thing in all this story of Jesus's life, does more establish the certainty of his being the true Messias : than that *John Baptist* (whose wisdom, learning, virtue, and rare sanctity, is confessed and recorded by the writings of all our adversaries) should refuse the honour of Messias offered to himself, and lay it upon Jesus : as also should direct those disciples that depended of him, to the only following and embracing of Jesus's doctrine. Which is most evidently proved that he did : for of so many followers and disciples, as himself had ; no one appeared ever after, that was not a Christian.

II.
The
preaching
and doc-
trine of
Christ
Jesus.
Deut. 6.
Mat. 2.

Heathen
doctrine.

Jewish
ceremonies

Turkish
Alcoran.

When Jesus was baptized, he began to preach : and his whole doctrine was directed to the manifestation of his father's will, and amendment of man's life. It tended all to this one ground and principle : *Thou shalt love thy Lord, with all thy soul ; and thy neighbour as thy self.* It was plain, easy, perspicuous, and evident ; tho' it treated of most high mysteries. It had neither pomp, nor pride of rhetorical words, nor flattering of man's wickedness, as the doctrine of many Philosophers had. Neither consisted it, of unprofitable external ceremonies, as the later observations of the *Jewish* law did ; nor was it fraught with carnality, and spirit of this world, as the *Turkish* Alcoran, and other sectaries doctrine is : but all was simplicity, all was spirit, all was truth, all was honesty, all was humility, all was charity.

It took away or disannulled no one perfect or spiritual point of *Moses's* law ; but rather revived, interpreted, fulfilled, and made perfect the same. For whereas that

com=

commanded external observance ; this added also, internal obedience. Whereas that said, love your friends ; this adjoined, love also your enemies. Whereas that commanded, we should not kill ; this further commands, to speak no angry words. Whereas that prohibited to commit actual adultery : this also forbids to covet in mind. Whereas that said, take no interest or usury of *Jew* that is thy countryman ; this says, take it of no man whatsoever. Whereas that accounted every *Jew* only to be thy neighbour ; this teaches every man living to be thy brother. Whereas that taught thee, to offer up a calf, a sheep, or an ox, for thy sins ; this instructs thee, to offer up a contrite heart, in the blood of him that died for all, with a firm purpose of amendment of life. And finally, this doctrine tends wholly to the true, sincere, and perfect service of God thy Lord, that made and redeemed thee, to the exaltation of his only name, power, goodness, and glory : to the depression of man's pride, by discovering his misery : to the contempt of this world, and vain pomp thereof : to the mortification and subduing of our sensual appetite : to the true love and unfeigned charity of our neighbour : to the stirring up of our spirit to celestial cogitations, peace of conscience, tranquillity of mind, purity of body, consolation of soul : and in one word, to reduce mankind again to a certain state of innocency, simplicity, and angelical sanctity upon earth, with his eye fixed only, on the eternal inheritance of God's kingdom in heaven.

The comparison of Christ's law with that of *Moses*.
Mat. 5.

The effect of Christ's doctrine.

This was the doctrine delivered by Jesus ; which is the same that God's prophets foretold should be delivered by the *Messias*. And as for his life and conversation ; by the testimony of his greatest adversaries, it was more admirable than his doctrine : his life being a most lively table, wherein the perfection of all his doctrine was expressed. A man of such gravity, as never in his life he was noted to laugh : of such humility ; as being the Son of God, he scarce used in this world the dignity of

III.
The life and conversation of Jesus.

a servant : of such sweet and mild behaviour ; that all the injuries of his enemies, never wrested from him one angry word. Finally, he was such an one, as he was described by *Isaiab*, so many ages before he was born,

Isaiab 42. in these words : *He shall not cry nor contend ; nor shall any man hear his voice in the streets : he shall not crush a broken reed ; nor tread out a little flax, that lieth smocking on the ground.* And another Prophet, not long

Zach. 9. after him, broke forth into this speech, upon the behaviour that should be in the Messias : *Rejoice thou daughter of Sion ; triumph thou daughter of Jerusalem : for behold, thy king shall come unto thee, thy just Saviour : he is poor and humble, &c.* And as the prophets did foretell the virtue and sanctity of the Messias ; so the devils themselves could not but confess the same to have

been fulfilled in the person of Jesus ; as it is most evident by the testimony of *Porphyr*, a professed enemy of the christian name : who, after consideration of divers oracles uttered by his idols, touching Jesus, breaks

Porphyr. 1. into this confession. *It is exceeding wonderful, what de laud. testimony the Gods do give of the singular piety, and sanctity of Jesus ; for which they avouch him rewarded with immortality : but yet these Christians are deceived in calling him God.* Thus much writes *Porphyr*. And

Josep. 1. 18. last of all, *Josephus* the Jew, that was born immediately ant. c. 7. after him. writes of him thus. *There was at this time one Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man : a worker of most wonderful miracles ; and a master, and teacher of all such men, as willingly were content to embrace the truth.*

Of Jesus's
miracles.

In which testimony of *Josephus*, we see mention also of Jesus's miracles, which is the next thing whereof we are to consider. And as *Josephus* in this place, being a Jew, bears witness that Jesus performed many strange miracles : so most apparently, and according to the interpretation of *Josephus* in this place, were the same miracles foretold by the prophets of God, that they should be done by the true Messias. So *Isaiab* in his twenty fifth chapter

chapter describes at large, how the Messias, at his coming, shall declare his commission by giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, and agility of body to the lame and cripple. And that which is more marvellous; God revealed this point very particularly to the *Gentiles* by the *Sibyls*; among whom one of them wrote thus of Christ to come, as *Lactantius* records. *He shall do all by his only word: he shall cure all infirmities: he shall raise the dead: he shall make the lame to run and skip, the deaf shall hear, the blind shall see, and the dumb speak. In five loaves and two fishes, five thousand persons shall be satisfied: and the fragments shall fill twelve baskets, to the hope of many. He shall command the winds, and walk upon the furious sea, with his feet of peace. And after divers other Greek verses to this purpose, she concludes in these words: Men shall say, that I am a mad and lying prophetess: but when all these things shall come to pass, then remember me; for then shall no man say more, that I was a liar, but rather the prophetess of the great God.*

Predictions
of the Mes-
sias mi-
racles.

Lac. l. div.
Instit. c. 15.

To these predictions of prophets in *Jury*, and among the *Gentiles*, do agree the doctors of the *Jews* themselves in many places of their *Thalmud*; to wit, that the Messias shall be wonderful in working miracles. And in their publick commentary upon *Ecclesiastes*, they have these words. *All the former miracles of prophets and saints, shall be nothing to the miracles of the Messias, when he comes.* And thus much of the foretelling of Christ's miracles. But now for the fulfilling thereof in Jesus; that is, how these predictions were performed in the stupendious works and actions of our Saviour, there is no difficulty. For besides the former testimony of *Josephus* (which were sufficient in this case) the *Jews* themselves do grant and record Jesus's miracles in divers treatises of their *Thalmud*: yea, they make mention of many wonderful things, which Jesus did, that are not written by our Evangelists. The same doth *Mahomet* in his *Alcoran*; affirming, Jesus the Son

Thal. tract.
Beracothica
merma-
thas Colin.

Misdrach
Cobeleth,
cap. 1.

The con-
fession of
Jesus's mi-
racles by
his enen-
mies. *Thal.*
in tract.
Avoda Za-
ra Mis-
drach Co-
beleth. Al-
coran. Al-
zoar. 1. 4.
of 11. 13.

of *Mary*, to have been a great Prophet, and to have wrought his miracles by the only power and spirit of God: and that himself was sent to confirm Jesus's doctrine, saving only in the point of his Godhead; wherein he says, that Jesus went too far, and had a check for the same at God's hand, when he returned to heaven.

Thus much do these enemies confess of Jesus's miracles. Which, as it is much, coming from such witnesses; so if they would either deny or dissemble the same, they might be proved against them by most evident reasons: especially in two points, wherein there can be no probability of denial.

The calling of the Apostles.
Jos. l. 18.
ant. c. 4.

The first is, the calling and retaining of his Apostles and other followers (whereof *Josephus* also in the place before alledged, makes mention, as of a great miracle) who were of divers callings, states, conditions, trades, and occupations in the world. And yet, all upon the sudden, left both father, mother, wife, children, and other temporal respects; and followed him, who had nothing to give or promise them in this world. A man that never spoke them fair, nor uttered doctrine, that was not repugnant to the sensuality of this life, as may appear by their own writings and testimonies of him. A man, that was contemned by the better sort, as then it might seem; that is, by the wise and learned of that country; and especially, disliked by them that were in government, as a dangerous and troublesome man to the state. One that had neither friends in the world to bear him out, nor house to put his head in: and yet, notwithstanding all this, that wordly men and women; and some such also as were great sinners, and loose livers before, should leave all their worldly hopes, stay, and condition, to follow such a man, with so great inconveniencies, losses, dangers, and disfavours as they did; and should continue with him in all his afflictions, and be content to die and loose their lives, rather than forsake him, or abandon his service: this, I say, is such a miracle, as never in the world fell out the like, and must

A great miracle.

must needs be granted by the enemy, to be supernatural.

The second point is of external things and facts done by Jesus, above all power and humane ability, in the sight and knowledge of all the *Jews*; which facts were published by our Evangelists, and especially by St. *Matthew*, in the *Hebrew* tongue; while yet the persons were alive, upon whom they were wrought; or infinite others that might be witnesses thereof. As for example, the raising of *Lazarus* in *Bethania*, that was a village but a mile or two distant from *Jerusalem*; at whose death and burial (being a gentleman) many scribes and pharisees must needs be present (according to the *Jewish* custom, at that time, reported by *Josephus*) and they saw him both deceased, interred, and the funeral feast observed for him; as also raised again by Jesus four days after his burial. With whom they did both eat and drink, and converse, after his return to life; and every day might behold him walking in the streets of *Jerusalem*. This story, I say, how could it be feigned.

So in like manner, the raising of the archi-synagogue's daughter, whose name is affirmed to be *Jairus*; with divers other circumstances, that do make the thing most notorious. The raising of the widow's son before the gate of the city of *Naim*, in the presence of all the people, that bore the corps and stood about it. The healing of the cripple in *Jerusalem*, that had lain eight and thirty years lame at the pool's side, or bath, called *Probatika*: which miracle was done also in the sight of infinite people. The casting out of a legion of devils, from a man that for many years together was known to live possessed in the mountains; which devils, by peculiar licence, obtained of Jesus, to enter into a herd of swine, and so presently carried them away into the sea and drowned them: whereupon the whole country about, of the people called *Gerasenes*, being struck with fear upon sight of the fact, besought Jesus most humbly to depart from their borders. The feeding and filling

The miraculous facts of Jesus.

I.

John 11.

Jos. l. 17. ant. c. 11.

II.

Mat. 9.

Mark 5.

III.

Luke 7.

IV.

John 5.

V.

Mat. 8.

Mark 5.

more

VI.
Mat. 14.
Luke 9.
 VII.
 VIII.
Luke 14.

more than five thousand men, besides women and children, with five barley loaves and two fishes only. The turning of water into wine, at the marriage of *Cana*, in the presence of all the guests. The healing of him by a word only, that had an incurable dropsy, and this at the table of a principal pharisee, and in the sight of all that set at dinner with him.

The con-
 clusion of
 this confi-
 deration.

John 10.

These, I say, and divers other such miracles, which were done in the presence and sight of infinite people, and recorded by our Evangelists at such time, when many desired to discredit the same, and might have done easily, by many witnesses and authority, if any part thereof had been subject to calumnation, cannot in reason or probability be doubted of. And therefore I must conclude, that seeing these things are above all humane nature, and could not be done, but by the finger and virtue of God himself; considering also, that it is impossible, that God assist, or give testimony to falsehood: it must needs ensue, that all was true and sincere, which Jesus affirmed: and consequently, seeing he affirmed himself to be Son of God, and the true Messias, it must needs follow by these miracles, that he was so indeed; which is the ground of that speech of his to the faithless pharisees: *If you will not believe my words, believe my deeds.* And thus much of Jesus's life, doctrine, conversation, and miracles.

The fourth
 considera-
 tion.
 The pas-
 sion and
 resurrecti-
 on.

Jos. l. 18.
ant. c. 4.

There remains now only the fourth and last consideration of this section; which is, the passion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. And about his passion, there is little or no controversy; for all his enemies do agree and grant, that he was betrayed by his own disciple, apprehended, afflicted, and delivered up by the *Jews*, and finally, put to death upon a cross by the *Gentiles*. The testimony of *Josephus* may suffice for all herein. Whose words are, *That the principal Jews of his country, having accused and delivered over Jesus to Pilate (that was governor of Jury for the Roman emperor) he adjudged him to the cross.* The same do all other *Jews* and *Gentiles*

tiles

tiles record; and in this they take great offence and scandal, that we should attribute divinity unto a man, that had suffered on the Cross.

But if we shew, that this was the eternal preordination and appointment of God, for saving of mankind; and that the same was foretold both to, *Jew* and *Gentile* from the beginning; and so understood also by the *Jewish* doctors of elder times: then every reasonable man, I believe, will remain satisfied; and prefer God's divine wisdom, before man's folly.

First then consider, that when Christ had ended his preaching, and wrought so many miracles as seemed sufficient to his eternal wisdom; and when the time was come preordained for his passion (whereof he told publickly his disciples before) he went up to *Jerusalem* on purpose to receive his death; and made a solemn entry into that city upon an ass, which was prophesied of him by *Zachariah*, many years before: *Rejoice daughter of Sion. Behold thy JUST KING and SAVI-OUR shall come unto thee upon an ass.*

Christ ascending to *Jerusalem* to receive his passion, *Mat. 20. & Mark 8. Mat. 21. Zach. 9.*

And after his abode some days in that place, he was betrayed and sold by his own disciple, as *David* beforehand in many places had foretold should come to pass. Then followed his apprehension and most servile usage by the *Jews*; whereof it was prophesied long before by *Isaiah*, *I gave my body to them that beat it: and my cheeks to them that buffeted the same. I did not turn my self away from them, that reproached me: nor yet from them, that spit in my face.*

Mark 10. and 16. Psalm 40. 54. 108. Isaiah 5.

After this barbarous treatment by the *Jews*, they delivered him over to *Pilate* a *Gentile*, and never ceased to solicit and pursue their unquenchable hatred against him, until they saw him on the cross. Where also he was used in the highest degree of spiteful dealing. Whereof the foresaid *David* made mention long before, in the person of the *Messias*, when he said: *They pierced my hands and feet, they divided among them my apparel: and upon my (upper) garment they did cast lots. And again,*

The barbarous abuse of Jesus foretold by prophecy.

Psalm 21.

again, of another cruelty he complains, saying: *They gave me gall to eat; and in my thirst they refreshed me with vinegar.*

Christ's
death most
plainly
foretold.

Gen. 21. 22

Num 21.

Dan. 9.

Zach. 12.

And finally, that Christ should die for the sins of mankind, is a common principle, both prefigured and foretold throughout all the old scripture. Prefigured by the sacrifice of *Isaac*; by the raising up of the brazen serpent; and by all other sacrifices that were in that law. Foretold, not only by the scriptures before alledged, but also most plainly by *Daniel*, who was told by an Angel, that after a certain time by him appointed: *Ungetur sanctus sanctorum*. The saint of saints shall be anointed, & *occidetur Christus*, this anointed saint or Christ shall be put to death. *Zachary* also, about the same time doth not only foretell his death, but also the kind thereof, and from what people he should receive the same: for thus he says in the person of Christ himself. *The inhabitants of Jerusalem, --- at that day, shall look upon me, whom they have pierced.*

The most
wonderful
prediction
of Christ's
passion by
Isaiah.

Isaiah 57.

Christ's de-
formity
upon the
cross.

Christ ap-
pointed to
die for our
sins.

But if ye will read the whole story of Christ's passion, set down at large six hundred years before it fell out: I refer you to a narration of *Isaiah*, who to signify the strangeness of the case, begins with this preface: *Who will give credit to that we shall report, &c.* And then after a little, he goes on in these words: *He shall mount up as a twig from a dry earth. He hath no form or beauty upon him. We beheld him, and there was no countenance in him: we saw him the most contemptible and despised man in the world. A man full of pains, and experienced in infirmity. His countenance was obscure and despicable, and we made no account of him. Truly, he took upon himself our griefs, and did bear our pains. We accounted him as a leper; and as a man stricken and punished by God. But he was wounded for our iniquities, and crushed in pieces for our wickedness. The discipline (or correction) of our peace lies upon him: and by his wounds we are made whole. We have all erred, and gone astray, like sheep, every man after his own ways:*

and

and God hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He was offered up, because himself would; ----- he shall be led to his slaughter as a sheep; and as a lamb he shall be silent before his shearers. -----

For the sins of my people have I stricken him, ----- The increase of
He hath done no iniquity; neither was there deceit found in his mouth. Yet would our Lord crush him in infirmity. Christ's kingdom
If he shall give his life for sin; then shall he see seed of long age, and the will of our Lord shall after his resurrection.
be directed in his hand. For so much as his soul has sustained labour, it shall see and be filled. And this MY

JUST SERVANT, * in his knowledge, shall justify many, * That is, in making
and bear their iniquities: and I will allot unto him very many people: and he shall divide the spoils of the stout; himself known, or
for that he hath delivered his soul unto death, and was revealing the knowledge of
accounted among the wicked, ---- and prayed for his transgressors. himself to the world.

Thus particularly, as you see, was the death and passion of Christ foretold by the prophets of Israel to that nation. Now hear ye the prophecy of Sibylla if ye please, wherein she foreshewed the same to the Gentiles. These are her words set down by Lactantius: The particulars of
He shall appear miserable, ignominious, and deformed; to Christ's passion, foretold by
the end he may give hope unto the miserable. Afterwards, Sibylla.
he shall come into the hands of most wicked and faithless Lactan. l. 4
men; they shall spit upon him with their unclean mouths. di. Instit.
He shall yield his innocent back to the whip, and shall say c. 16. & 18.
nothing while he receives the stripes, to the end he may speak to those that are dead. He shall bear a crown of thorns; and they shall give him gall to eat, and vinegar to drink. And this shall be the hospitality he shall find among them. What thing can be more plainly described than this.

Neither do the ancient Rabbins and teachers among the Jews dissent from this. For in their *Thalmud* that was gathered above twelve hundred years ago, the plain sentences of divers are set down, that their Messias at his coming, shall be put to death. And as for Rabbi

Ruth. Rab. *Jonathan*, author of the *Chaldee* paraphrase, who died a little before Christ was born, he applies the whole narration of *Isaiab* before recited (as needs he must) to the murder of the Messias by the *Jews*. Whereupon, *Rabbi Simeon*, that lived the next age after, writes these words following: *Wo be to the men of Israel, for that they shall slay the Messias. God shall send his Son in man's flesh to wash them, and they shall murder him.* Whereunto agrees *Rabbi Hadarsan* and others, and do prove further out of the fore alledged prophecy of *Daniel*, that after Messias shall have preached half seven years, he shall be slain. For that *Daniel* says: *In half seven years, the host and sacrifice shall cease.* Upon which words they comment thus: *Three years and a half shall the presence of God in flesh cry and preach upon the mount Olivet; and then shall he be slain.* Which words the *Jews* ordinary * commentary upon the *Psalms*, doth interpret to be meant of Christ's preaching three years and a half before his passion; which disagrees very little or nothing from the account of us *Christians*, and of our Evangelists.

Of the Miracles that fell out in Christ's death and passion.

Laet. l. 4. divin. inst. c. 19. And so we see, by all that hitherto has been said, that the very particulars of Christ's whole death and passion, were foretold most plainly both to *Jew* and *Gentile*, and acknowledged also by the ancient Doctors of the *Jewish* nation, before the effectuation thereof came to pass. And *Sibylla* adds further two particular miracles, that should fall out in the said passion of the Messias, to wit: *That the veil of the Jews temple should break in two; and that at midday, there should be darkness for three hours, over all the world.* Which thing to have been fulfilled at the death of Jesus, not only *St. Matthew* doth assure us in his Gospel; but also *Eusebius* affirms, that he had read the same, word for word recorded in divers heathen writers. And amongst others he cites one *Pblegon*, an exact chronicler, that reports the same in the fourth year of the two hundred and second olympias; which agrees just with the eighteenth

Mat. 27.
Euseb. in Chron. An. Dom. 32.
Pbleg.
Trallian l. 24 Chron. An. 4. Olim. 202.

teenth year of *Tiberius's* reign, wherein our Saviour suffered. And he goes so nigh, as to name the very hours of the day, which our Evangelists do. * *Æscu-* * See Orig.
lus also an old astronomer, does confirm the same, and cont. *Cels.*
 proves moreover, by the situation and constitution of 16. & *Suid*
 the Sun and Moon at that time, that no eclipse could in verbo
 then be natural. Which thing in like manner, *Dio-* *Jesus, Tert*
nysius Areopagita did observe in the very day of Christ's in apolog.
 passion, being at that time but twenty five years old, *Dion A-*
 and well studied in astronomy, as himself testifies. And reop. in ep.
 finally, *Lucianus* a learned priest of *Antioch*, was accus- *Lucian pr.*
 tomed to provoke the *Gentiles* to their own commenta- apud *Euf.*
 ries and stories, for record and testimony of those things.

There ensues now, for ending and confirmation of Of Jesus's
 all that hath been said and proved before, to add a resurrecti-
 word or two of Jesus's resurrection. Which point, as on.
 of all others it is of most importance: so was it most
 exactly foretold both to *Jew*, and *Gentile*; and promi-
 sed by Christ himself in all his speeches, while he was
 upon earth. And among the *Jews*, it was assured by
 all the prophecies before recited, which do promise so
 great abundance of glory, joy, and triumph, to Christ's
 church after his passion. Which never possibly could *Jonas 2.*
 be fulfilled, unless he had risen from death again. And
 therefore the said resurrection was prefigured in *Jonas*;
 together with the time of his abode in the sepulchre. It
 was also expressly foreshewed by *David*, affirming: *Psalms 15.*
That God would not permit his holy one to see corruption.
 And after him again, more plainly by *Hosea*: *Hosea 6.*
He shall quicken us again after two days: in the third day he shall
raise us, and we shall live in his sight. And to the
Gentiles, *Sibylla* left written, not far from the same time:
He shall end the necessity of death, by three days sleep: Laet. 1. 4.
and then returning from death to light again, he shall be *Just. Dia.*
the first, that shall shew the beginning of resurrection to his cap. 19.
chosen: for that by conquering death, he shall bring us life.

Thus much was promised by Prophets, before Christ's
 appearance. And Jesus, to comfort his Disciples and

followers, reiterated this promise himself in many speeches; tho' oftentimes his meaning was not perceived. Which promise of return from death, if it had been made for some long time to come. (as *Mahomet* promised his *Saracens* after eight hundred years to revisit them again) altho' the performance were never meant, yet might the falshood lurk in the length of time. But Jesus assuring all men, that he would rise again within three days; it cannot be imagined, but that he sincerely purposed to perform his promise, for otherwise the fraud must soon have been discovered. Now then, let us consider what manner of performance Jesus made hereof.

And first the persons most interested in the matter, as they whose total hope, stay, refuge, and felicity depended hereof, I mean his appalled, dismayed, and afflicted Disciples, do recount twelve sundry apparitions, which Jesus made to them in flesh, after his resurrection.

Mat. 16. The first to *Mary Magdalen* apart, when she, with *Salome*, and other women, went and remained with ointments about the sepulchre. The second, was to all the foresaid women together, as they returned homewards; who also were permitted to embrace his feet.

Mat. 28. The third, was to *Simon Peter* alone. The fourth, to the two disciples in their journey to *Emaus*. The fifth was to the Apostles and other Disciples together, when the doors were shut. The sixth was to the same company again, after eight days, when *Thomas* was with them: at what time also he did both eat, and drink, and suffered his body to be handled among them. The seventh was to *St. Peter* and *St. John*, with five other Disciples, when they were fishing: at what time also he vouchsafed to eat with them. The eighth, was to eleven Disciples at one time, upon mount *Tabor* in *Galilee*. The ninth was to more than five hundred brethren at one time, as *St. Paul* testifies. The tenth was to *St. James*, as the same Apostles records. The eleventh, was to all his Apostles, Disciples, and friends together, upon the mount *Olivet* by *Jerusalem*, when

in their presence, he ascended up to heaven. The ¹ Cor. 15. twelfth and last, was after his ascension, unto St. Paul, as himself bears witness.

All these apparitions are recorded in scripture, as made by Jesus after his resurrection, to such as by his eternal wisdom, were preordained to be witnesses of so glorious a spectacle. To whom as St. Luke affirms. *He ^{Acts 1.} shewed himself alive by many arguments, for the space of forty days together, and reasoned with them of the kingdom of his Father.* And why any man should mistrust the testimony of these men that saw him, conversed with him, eat with him, touched him, and heard him speak; and whose entire estate and welfare depended wholly of the certainty hereof; I see no reason. For what comfort had it been, or consolation to these men, to have devised of themselves, these former apparitions? what encouragement might they have taken, in those doleful times of desolation and affliction, to have had among them, the dead body of him, on whose only life their universal hope and confidence depended? the scribes and pharisees being astonished with the sudden news of his rising again, confirmed unto them by their own soldiers that saw it, found no other way to resist the same thereof, but only by saying (as also their posterity do unto this day) that his disciples came by night, and stole away his body, whilst the soldiers were asleep. But what likelihood or possibility can there be in this? for first, it is evident to all the world, that his Apostles themselves (who were the heads of all the rest) were so dismayed, discomfited, and dejected at that time, that they durst not once go out of the door. For which cause only, those women, who for their sex esteemed themselves more free from violence, presumed alone to visit his sepulchre; which no one man durst, for fear of the soldiers; until by those women they were informed, that the foresaid band of soldiers were terrified and put to flight by Christ's resurrection.

Circumstances that confirm the true resurrection of Jesus.

Great improbabilities.

And how then was it likely, that men so much amazed and overcome with fear, should adventure to steal a body from a guard of soldiers that kept it? or if their hearts had served them to adventure so great a danger: what hope or probability had there been of success? especially, considering the said body lay in a new sepulchre of stone, shut up and locked, and fast sealed by the magistrate? how was it possible, I say, that his Disciples should come thither? break up the monument? take out his body? and carry the same away, never after to be seen or found, without espial of some one amongst so many that attended there? or if this were possible (as in reason it is not) yet what profit, what pleasure, what comfort, could they receive hereby? we see that these Apostles and Disciples of his, who were so abandoned of life and heart in his passion, were afterwards so changed, that life and death can be no more contrary.

The great change in Jesus's Disciples, by his resurrection.

For, whereas, before they kept home in all fear, and durst appear no where; except among their own private friends: now they came forth into the streets and common places, and avouched with all alacrity, and irresistible constancy; even in the faces and hearing of their greatest enemies; that Jesus was risen from death to life; that they had seen him; spoken with him; and enjoyed his presence. And that for testimony and confirmation hereof, they were most ready to spend their lives. And could all this, think you, proceed only from a dead body, which they had gotten by stealth into their possession? would not the presence and sight of such a body; so torn, mangled, and deformed as Jesus's body, both upon the cross and before, have rather dismayed them more, than have given them comfort? yes truly. And therefore *Pilate* the governor, considering these circumstances; and that it was unlikely, that either the body should be stolen without privity of the soldiers; or if it had been, that it should yield such life, heart, consolation, and

The examination of the matter by *Pilate*.

and courage to the stealers: began to give ear more diligently to the matter, and calling to him the soldiers, that kept the watch, understood by them the whole truth of the accident: to wit, that in their sight and presence, Jesus was risen out of his sepulchre to life; and that, at his rising, there was so dreadful an earthquake with trembling and opening of sepulchres round about; such shrieks, cries, and commotions of all elements: that they durst not abide longer, but ran and told the *Jewish* magistrates thereof; who being greatly discontented, as it seemed, with the advertisement; gave them money to say, that while they were sleeping, the body was stoln by his disciples from them.

All this wrote *Pilate* presently to his lord *Tiberius*, then emperor of *Rome*. And he sent withal, the particular examinations and confessions of divers others, that had seen, and spoken with such as were risen from death at the same time, and had appeared to many of their acquaintance in *Jerusalem*; assuring them also of the resurrection of Jesus. Which informations, when *Tyberius* the emperor had considered, he was greatly moved, and proposed to the senate, that Jesus might be admitted among the rest of the *Roman* Gods; offering his own consent, with the privilege of his supreme royal suffrage to that decree. But the senate in no wise would agree thereunto. Whereupon *Tiberius* being offended, gave licence to all men to believe in Jesus that would; and forbid, upon pain of death, that any officer, or other should molest, or trouble such, as bore good affection, zeal, or reverence to that name. Thus much testifies *Tertullian* against the *Gentiles* of his own knowledge; who living in *Rome*, being a learned man, and pleader of causes, divers years before he was a Christian, (which was about one hundred and eighty years after Christ's ascension) had great ability, by reason of the honour of his family, learning, and place wherein he lived, to see and know the records of the *Romans*. And

Pilate's letter to Tiberius, and his proceeding thereupon.

Tertul. in Apol pro Christian.

Egesp. l. 4. hist. Enf. l. 4. c. 21. Ruffin. l. 1. cap. 22.

the same does confirm also *Egesippus* another ancient writer, of no less authority than *Tertullian*, before whom he lived.

The opinion of the wiser sort of *Jews* touching Jesus's resurrection in that time.

Not only divers *Gentiles* had this opinion of Jesus's resurrection again from death; but also sundry *Jews* of great credit, and wisdom at that time, were forced to believe it: notwithstanding it pleased not God to give them so much grace, as to become Christians. This appeared plainly by the learned *Josephus*, who writing his history, not above forty years after Christ's passion, took occasion to speak of Jesus, and of his Disciples; and after he had shewed how he was crucified by *Pilate*, at the instance of the *Jews*: and that for all this, his Disciples ceased not to love him still: he adjoins forthwith these words. *Idcirco, illis, tertio die vita resumpta, denuo apparuit.* That is, for this love of his Disciples, he appeared unto them again the third day, when he had resumed life. Which express plain, and resolute words, we may in reason take, not as the confession only of *Josephus*, but as the common judgment, opinion, and sentence of all the discreet and sober men of that time, laid down and recorded by this historiographer; in whose days there were many Christians yet alive, that had seen, and spoken with Jesus after his resurrection; and infinite *Jews*, that had heard the same protested by their fathers, brethren, kinsfolk, and friends, who had been themselves eye witnesses thereof.

Joseph. l. 4. ant. c. 4.

Of Jesus's ascension.

And thus having declared and proved the resurrection of our Saviour Jesus, both how it was foreshewed, as also fulfilled, there remains nothing more of necessity to be said in this section. For whosoever sees and acknowledges, that Jesus being dead, could raise himself again to life, will easily believe also, that he was able to ascend to heaven. Whereof notwithstanding, *St. Luke* alledges six score witnesses at the least, in whose presence he ascended from the top of mount *Olivet*, after forty days space which he had spent with them, from

Acts 1.

from the time of his resurrection. He alledges also, the appearing of two Angels among all the people, for testimony whereof he names the day, the place, when, and where it happened. He recounts the very words that Jesus spoke at his ascension. He tells the manner how he ascended, and how a cloud came down and received him into it. He declares what the multitude did, whither they went, and in what place they remained after their departure thence. And finally he sets down so many particulars ; as it had been the easiest matter in the world, for his enemies to have refuted his narration, if all had not been true. Neither was there any to receive more damage by the falshood thereof, than himself, and those of his profession, if the matter had been feigned.

Likeli-
hoods of
truth.

Wherefore to conclude at length this treatise of the birth, life, doctrine, actions, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus : seeing nothing has happened in the same, which was not foretold in the Prophets of God ; nor any thing foreshewed by the same Prophets concerning the Messias, which was not fulfilled exactly, within the compass and course of Jesus's abode upon earth ; we may most certainly assure our selves, that as God can neither foretell an untruth, nor yield testimony to the same : so can it not be, but that these things which we have shewed to have been so manifestly foreprophecied, and so evidently accomplished ; must needs ascertain us, that Jesus was the true Messias : which thing shall yet more particularly appear, by that which ensued by his power and virtue, after his ascension ; which shall be the argument of the section that follows.

The con-
clusion of
this second
section.



S E C T. IV.

How Jesus proved his Deity, after his departure to Heaven.

The contents of this fourth section.

AS by the deeds and actions of Jesus, while he was upon earth, compared with the predictions of God's Prophets from time to time, he hath been declared in the former sections, to be the true Messias and Saviour of the world; so in this that now we take in hand, shall the same be shewed by such things, as ensued after his ascension and departure from this world, wherein his power and deity appeared more manifestly, if it may be, than in other his works, which he wrought in this life. In which kind, tho' I might treat of many, and almost infinite branches; yet for order and brevity sake, I mean only to take in consideration these few that ensue: wherein, not only the power of Jesus, but also his love, his care, and most perfect accomplishment of all his speeches, prophecies and doctrine upon earth have been declared.

The division of the particular considerations ensuing.

And to reduce what is to be said herein to some order and method; it is to be noted, that in the first place shall be considered the sustentation, protection, increase, and continuation of Jesus's little church and kingdom, that himself first planted and left upon earth. The second consideration shall be of his Apostles and their actions. The third, of his Evangelists. The fourth, of his witnesses and martyrs throughout the world. The fifth, shall treat of the kingdom of infernal powers, beaten down by his virtue. The sixth, of the punishment and just revenge that lighted upon his enemies, who most impugned his divine person in this world. The seventh and last shall declare the fulfilling of all such prophecies and predictions, as proceeded from his divine mouth, while he was conversant upon earth.

Now then for the first it is to be considered, that at Jesus's departure out of this world from the mount
Olivet,

Olivet, St. *Luke* reports, that all the multitude of his followers, which there had beheld his ascension into heaven, returned back together into the city of *Jerusalem*, and there remained in one house together ; continuing in prayer, and expectation what should become of them. The whole city was bent against them ; themselves were poor and simple people ; and divers of them women : lands or revenues they had not to maintain them ; nor friends in court to give them countenance against their enemies. The name of *JESUS* was most odious ; and whosoever did favour him, was accounted a traitor and enemy to the state. There wanted not perhaps, among them, who, considering the great multitude, would imagine with themselves, what should become of themselves ? where they should find to maintain and sustain them ? what should be the end of that feeble congregation ? abroad they durst not go, for fear of persecution ; and continue long together they might not, for want of necessities. Besides every hour they expected to be molested and drawn forth by catchpoles and officers. And altho', in these distresses, the fresh memory of *Jesus*, and his sweet promises made unto them at his departure ; as also the delectable presence of his blessed Mother, and her frequent exhortations and encouragements unto them, did comfort them greatly, as well may be supposed : yet to him who by human reason should ponder and weigh their present state and condition ; it could not choose but seem hard, and no ways durable.

The first consideration. Christ's Church.

The state of Christ's first coming.

But behold upon the sudden, when they had continued now ten days together, and might by all probability find themselves in very high degree of temporal distresses ; *Jesus* performed his promise, of sending them a *COMFORTER*, which was the Holy Ghost. By whose coming, besides the internal joy, and incredible alacrity and exultation of mind, they received also fortitude and audacity to go forth into the world. They received the gift of tongues, enabling them to converse and deal with all sorts of people. They received

The coming of the Holy Ghost, and what comforts he brought with him. *Acts* 2.

received

ceived wisdom and learning, with most wonderful illumination in highest mysteries, whereby to preach, to teach, and convince their adversaries. They received the gift of prophecy, to foretell things to come; together with the power of working signs and miracles, whereby the whole world remained astonished. And for a taste of that which should ensue, concerning the infinite increase of that little congregation; they saw three thousand of their adversaries converted to them, in one day, by a sermon of St. *Peter*.

*Sueton. in
vita Nero.
Corn. Tac.
l. 5. hist.*

Which increase went on so fast, for the time that ensued, that within forty years after, the *Gentiles* themselves confess, the branches of this congregation were spread over all the world, and began to put in fear the very emperors themselves. Whereof not long after, a man as learned as ever was any, converted from Paganism to Christianity, bears record in his apology to an emperor and his officers, who, according to the nature of persecutors, accounted Christians for traitors to his state and dignity: which vulgar objection, this foresaid learned man refutes in these words.

*Tertullian
in Apolog.
ad gentes.*

“ If we were enemies to your estate, you might
“ well seek new cities and countries, whereof to bear
“ government; for that you should have in your
“ empire more enemies than citizens. We have filled
“ your towns, your cities, your provinces, your islands,
“ your castles, your fortresses, your tents, your camps,
“ your courts, your palaces, your senates, and your
“ market-places. Only we have left your idolatrous
“ temples unto your selves; all other places are full of
“ Christians. If we were enemies, what dangerous
“ wars might we make against you, tho’ our number
“ were far less, who esteem so little our lives, as to
“ offer our selves daily to be slain by your hands? this
“ then is your safety in very deed; not your persecuting
“ of us; but that we are honest, patient, and
“ obedient; and that it is more lawful in Christian
“ religion, to be killed, than to kill.”

By

By which words of *Tertullian*, in this first beginning and infancy, as it were, of Christian religion (for he lived in the second age after Christ,) we see how this little flock and kingdom of Jesus was increased; notwithstanding all the resistance, and violence of the world against it. Which appears by the same *Tertullian* to have been such, and was even at that time when he wrote those words (the fourth persecution being then in most fury) that all the malefactors of the world together had not so much rigour shewed against them; as had the most innocent Christian that lived, for confessing only that name and religion.

The wonderful quick increase of Christ's Church.
In præfat. Apolog.

This declared most apparently, that it could not proceed, but from some divine power and supernatural assistance, that in so short a space, amidst the contradiction and opposition of so many adversaries; among the whips, and swords, and tortures, of so great, potent, and violent persecutors; this poor, simple, and feeble congregation should pierce through, and augment it self so strongly. Especially, if we consider the outward means of this increase; wherein there was nothing to allure, or content man's nature; nothing gorgeous, nothing delectable, nothing to please or entertain sensuality.

The increase of Christians against nature.

We read of an emperor, that taking in hand to conquer the world, he made this proclamation for winning men unto his party: " Whosoever will come and be my servant; if he be a footman, I will make him a horseman. If he be a horseman, I will make him ride in coaches. If he be a farmer, I will make him a gentleman. If he possess a cottage, I will give him a village. If he have a village, I will give him a city. If he be lord of a city, I will make him prince of a region and country. And as for gold, I will pour it forth unto them by heaps and weight, and not by number."

Plutarch in Apoth. Præf. reg.
The proclamation of Cyrus monarch of Media.

This was *Cyrus's* edict and proclamation to his followers, very glorious, as we see, in pomp of words and ostentation of style. Let us now compare the proclamation of Jesus, whose entrance and preface was: *pænitentiam*

Jesus's proclamation.

Mat. 3. tentiam agite: do ye penance. And then it followed:
John 16. in hoc mundo pressuram habebitis: in this world you shall
Mat. 10. receive affliction. And then again, They shall whip, and
murder you. And yet further, You shall be hateful in the
sight of all men, for my sake. Then there is adjoyned;
Luke 9. He that loveth his life shall lose his soul. After that ensues:
He that will follow me, must bear his cross. And finally
Luke 14. the conclusion is: He that cometh to me, and doth not
bate his father, his mother, his wife, his children, his
brethren, his sisters, as also his own life, he is not wor-
thy to be my servant.

Mat. 5. This was the entertainment proposed by Jesus, to such as would come to serve under his banner; with express protestation, that himself was sent into the world, not to bring peace, rest, and ease to flesh and blood; but rather to be the cause of sword, fire, tribulation, combat, and enmity. And yet with these cold offers, presented to the world by poor, abject, and most contemptible officers; and by this doctrine, so cross and opposite to man's nature, inclination, and sensual appetite; he gained more hearts unto him within the space of forty years, as has been said, than ever did monarch in the world possess loving subjects, by whatsoever temporal allurements they did, or might propose. Which argues most evidently, the omnipotent puissance of him, that, contrary to all appearance, could bring to pass so miraculous a conquest.

The second
 considera-
 tion.
 Of Christ's
 Apostles.

There follows in order, the consideration of Christ's Apostles; which in some respect may be said more strange and wonderful than the former; in that they being both rude, and simple, and unlearned men (and for the most part of the lower sort) should be chosen and assigned to so great a work, as was the conversion of all countries, and nations; and to stand in combat with the power, learning, and wisdom of all the world. Neither only had they to contend, and fight against their enemies; but also to direct, and govern, and manage all those, who should be adjoined to their master's

ster's kingdom. To which charge, they seemed so unfit, and insufficient in all that time, wherein they lived with him upon the earth; that by their questions and demands made unto him, a little before his passion, they might appear to have learned very little, in three whole years conversation, and instruction; and in very deed, to be incapable of so high mysteries, and functions.

Yet notwithstanding, these men, who of themselves were so weak and impotent, after strength and confirmation received by the descending of God's holy Spirit into them; became so perfect, able, and most excellent men, that they brought the whole world in admiration of them: not only by the most exquisite perfection of their doctrine (wherein of a sudden, without study, they excelled, and convinced the greatest Philosophers then living) but also, and this especially, by the rare and stupendious Miracles, which they wrought in the sight of all men. The contemplation whereof, as *St. Luke* reports, drove the beholders, not only into great marvel, but also into fear and exceeding terror. *Acts 2.*

And for example, he recounts the restoring of a lame man at the temple gate of *Jerusalem*, which had been a cripple for the space of forty years or more; and the Miracle done and testified in the presence, and knowledge of all the city. He records also the dreadful death of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, by the only speech and voice of *St. Peter*: as in like manner, the healing of infinite sick people, by the presence, and shadow of the same Apostle. He reports the most wonderful deliverance of the said *St. Peter* out of the hands and prison of *Herod* by an Angel. The variety of languages, which all the Apostles spoke. The visible descending of the Holy Ghost upon all such, on whom the said Apostles did but lay their hands. The miraculous conversion of *St. Paul*, by Christ's appearing unto him in the way, when he went to persecute him. Of which Miracle, *St. Paul* gave witness in every place afterwards; *The Apostles miracles.*
Acts 3.
Acts 5.
1 Cor. 15.
2 Cor. 12.
Acts 9.22.
26.

wards; and once especially, in open audience and judgment before *Agrippa* the king, and *Festus* governor of *Jury*.

The miracles reported of the Apostles, could not be feigned.

Acts 16.

These miracles, and many more are recorded by *St. Luke*; whereof some part were seen by himself, and the rest more evident to all the world, as done in publick before infinite witnesses. Neither is it possible they could be forged; for, as in the like I have noted before, it had been most easy to have refelled them, and thereby to have discredited the whole proceedings of Christian religion in those first beginnings. As for example, if the miracle of *Peter's* delivery forth of the hands, and prison of *Herod Agrippa*, had any way been to be touched with falshood; how many would there have been of *Herod's* officers, courtiers, servants, or friends, that, for defence of their prince's honour (so deeply tainted by this narration of *St. Luke*, published not long after the thing was done) how many, I say, would have offered themselves to refute, and disgrace the writers thereof; having so pregnant means by publick record to do the same? so again, whereas the same *Luke* reports of his own knowledge, that in a city of *Macedonia* named *Philippi*, *St. Paul*, and *Silas*, after many miracles done, were whipped, and put in prison, with a diligent guard, in the lowest prison of all, there locked fast in the stocks of timber; and that, at midnight, when *Paul* and *Silas* began to pray, the whole prison was shaken, and all the doors thrown open; as also the strackles, not only of those two, but of all the other prisoners, upon a sudden burst in sunder; and that thereupon, not only the jaylor cast himself at the feet of *Paul*, but the magistrates also, who the day before had caused them to be whipt, came and asked them pardon, and entreated them to depart from their city: this story, I say, if it had been false, there needed no more for confutation thereof; but only to have examined the whole city of *Philippi*, which could have testified the contrary.

And

And yet, amongst so many adversaries, and eager impugn- None ever
ers of Christian religion, as God's enemy stirr'd up durst im-
in the primitive church, of all sorts and sects of people; pugn the
no one ever appear'd, that durst attempt to take in hand miracles of
the particular disproving of these or the like miracles; our Apo-
but rather confessing the facts, sought always to discre- stles, but by
dit them by other sinister calumniation: namely and calumnia-
commonly, that they were wrought by the deceits and tion.
sights of art-magick. Thus said the *Jews* of the mira- *Mat. 12.*
cles of *Jesus*; and so said *Julian* the apostate of the won- *Apud Ci-*
derful strange things done by *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*; *rys. l. 1.*
affirming them to have been the most expert in magick *con. Jul.*
of any that ever lived; and that *Christ* wrote a book of *Aug. l. de*
that profession, and dedicated it to *Peter* and *Paul*; *vera Re-*
whereas notwithstanding, it is most evident, that *Paul* *lig.*
was a persecutor divers years after *Christ* departed. One *Euseb. l.*
Hierocles also wrote a book, wherein he feigns *Appo-* *cont. hier.*
lonius Tyanæus to have done the like miracles by magick,
which *Christ* and his Apostles did by divine power. And
finally, it is a general opinion, that both *Nero*, and *Julian*
gave themselves so extreamly to the study of that vain
science, as no men ever did the like; upon emulation
only of the miracles done in *Rome* by *Peter*, and *Paul*,
when *Nero* lived; and by other Saints and Disciples, in
the time of *Julian*.

But what was the end? *Pliny* that was a Pagan writes *Plin. l. 30.*
thus of *Nero*. As no man ever labour'd more than *Nat. hist. c.*
he in that science: so no man left a more certain testi- 1.
mony of the marvellous exceeding vanity thereof. The *Zosimus in*
like in effect writes *Zosimus* of *Julian* tho' himself a *vit. Julia*
malicious heathen. And, if it were not written; yet
their extraordinary calamities, and most miserable deaths,
which by all their magick they could not foresee, do
sufficiently testify the same unto us; especially the last
words of *Julian*: *Vicisti Galilee, vicisti.* Thou hast over- *Nicoph. l.*
come, O *Galilean*, thou hast gotten the victory: acknow- 10. c. 35.
ledging thereby, as well the truth of *Christ's* miracles, *hist.*

and of his followers; as also the vanity, folly, and madness, of his own endeavours.

Thus then went forward Christ's Apostles, and preach'd him every where throughout the world: *Domino cooperante: & sermonem confirmante, sequentibus signis*, that is, our Lord Jesus working with them, and confirming their preaching by signs and miracles. In respect of which benign assistance of Jesus in their actions, St. Luke says further: *They dealt most confidently in our Lord: his word of grace giving testimony to their doings, and shewing forth signs and most prodigious wonders by their hands*. No persecution, no terror, no threats of enemies, no difficulty, or danger, that might occur, could stay them from their course of setting forth Christ's name and glory. And they were so assured of the truth, by the inward illuminations which they had; and by this certain testimony of God's favour, and assistance in doing miracles; that one of them writes thus: *That---which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have beheld, which our hands have handled of the word of life-----that we do testify and announce unto you*. And another, * who had been a grievous persecutor; and was converted without conference with any Christian in the world, said, of Jesus Christ that was dead, and risen again: that, *Neither tribulation, nor distress, nor famine, nor beggary, nor danger, nor persecution, nor dint of sword*, could daunt him from the service of such a master. And in another place, he says; that he esteem'd all things in this world, wherein a man might glory, to be as *very dung and detriment, in respect of the eminent knowledge of his Lord Jesus Christ*. In which very name, he took so exceeding great delight; that in a few epistles, which he left written; he is observed to have used this sentence, *Dominus noster Jesus Christus*, our Lord Jesus Christ; above two hundred times.

Neither

The success of the Apostles.
Mat. 16.

Acts 14.

The assurance of the Apostles.

1 John 1.

**St. Paul.*

Rom. 8.

Phil. 3.

Neither endured this in these Apostles, for a time only, but all their lives, which, as they spent with alacrity in the service of Jesus; so in the end they gave up the same most chearfully, to whatsoever death presented itself, for confirmation and sealing of their former doctrine: never so full of confidence, courage, and consolation as at that hour: nor ever so boldly denouncing their master, or talking so joyfully of rewards, crowns, and kingdoms; as at the very last instant and upshot of their worldly combat. This then declares most manifestly, that the actions of these men proceeded not of human spirit, nor could be perform'd by the power of man; but by the divine force, and supernatural assistance of their Lord and God, whom they confess'd.

The joyful ending of the Apostles.

2 Tim. 4.
1 Thes. 2.

And thus much in brevity, of Christ's Apostles. There ensue his Evangelists: that is, such men, as have left unto us written, his birth, life, doctrine, and death. Wherein is to be noted, that Jesus being God, took a different way from the custom of man, in delivering unto us his laws and precepts. For men, who have been law-makers unto the world, knew no surer way of publishing their laws, and procuring authority to the same; than to write them with their own hands, and in their life-time to establish their promulgation. So *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, and others, among the *Grecians*: *Numa* to the *Romans*: *Mahomet* to his *Saracens*: and divers others in like manner. But Jesus, to shew his divine power in directing the pen and stile of his Evangelists, would not leave any thing written himself; but pass'd from this world in simplicity and silence, without any further shew or ostentation of his own doings: meaning notwithstanding by his eternal wisdom, that the prophecy of *Ezekiel* should be fulfill'd, which fore-signified the being of his four irrefragable witnesses, which day and night, without rest, should preach, extol, and magnify their Lord and Master, to the world's end.

The third consideration. Of the Evangelists.

Jesus left nothing written by himself.

Ezekiel 1.

The different qualities, and circumstances of the four Evangelists.

Four then were foreprophecied ; and four, as we see, by God's providence were provided, to fulfil the same prophecy. The first and last are two Apostles, that wrote as they had seen. The middle two are two Disciples, who register'd things, as they had understood by conference with the Apostles. The first Gospel was written by an Apostle ; to give authority and confirmation to all the others. The first was written in *Hebrew* or *Jewish* tongue, for that Jesus's actions were done in that country ; to the end that either thereby the whole nation might believe them, or the obstinate impugn them. The other three were written in the publick tongues of all other nations : that is, in the *Greek* and *Roman* languages ; if it be true, * which divers hold, that St. *Mark's* Gospel was first written in *Latin*.

* See *Armacan* l. 9. *ds quæst.*

Circumstances of truth in our Evangelists.

They wrote their histories in divers Countries ; each one remaining far distant from another : and yet agreed they all, as we see, most exactly, in the very same narration. They wrote in divers times, the one after the other ; and yet the latter did neither correct nor reprehend any thing in the former. They publish'd their histories, when infinite were alive, that knew the facts ; and many more, that desired to impugn them. They set down in most of their particular narrations, the time, the day, the hour, the place, the village, the house, the persons, the men, the women, and other the like. Which circumstances the more they are in number, the more easy to be refuted, if they were not true. Neither did they in *Jury* write of things done in *India* ; but in the country itself ; in towns and cities, that were publickly known ; in *Bethania*, and *Bethsaida*, villages hard by *Jerusalem* ; in the suburbs, and hills about the city ; in such a street ; at such a gate ; in such a porch of the temple ; in such a fish-pool, which all people in *Jerusalem* did every day behold.

The publishing of our gospels

They publish'd their writings in their own life-time ; and preach'd in word, as much as in writing they had recorded. They permitted the same to the judgment and

and examination of all Christ's church ; especially of the Apostles, who were able to discern the very least thing therein contain'd. So *Mark* set forth his Gospel, by the instruction and approbation of St. *Peter* : as also did St. *Luke* by the authority of St. *Paul*. They alter'd not their writings afterwards, as other authors are wont, in their later editions : nor did they ever correct, what they had first set down. And, which never happen'd in any other writings in the world besides, nor ever prince or monarch was able to bring to pass, for credit of his edicts or sanctions ; they gave their lives for defence, and justifying of what they had written.

Their manner of writing is sincere and simple ; without all art ; amplification, or rhetorical exornation. They flatter none : no not Jesus himself, whom they most adore : nor, in confessing him to be their God and Creator, do they conceal his infirmities of flesh, in that he was man : as his hunger and thirst, his being weary, how he wept, his passions of fear, and the like. So likewise, in the Apostles that were the governors, superiors, and heads of all the rest, do these Evangelists dissemble, hide, or pass over no such things as were defects, and might seem to worldly eyes, to turn to their discredit. As for example ; how Christ rebuked them for their dulness in understanding ; how after long instruction they proposed notwithstanding very rude and impertinent questions unto him : how *Thomas* would not believe the attestation of his fellows : how St. *John*, and St. *James* the sons of *Zebede* ambitiously solicited to have the preeminence of sitting nearest to Christ in glory. Which later clause, being set down clearly by St. *Mark*, while yet St. *John* the Apostle was living ; the same was never denied, nor taken ill by the said Apostle : neither St. *Mark*'s Gospel the less approved by him ; tho' he lived longest, and wrote last of all the rest.

Nay, which is more, and greatly, no doubt, to be observed : these Evangelists were so sincere and religious in their narrations : that they noted especially the

*Hieron. in
catalog.
Scrip. Ecc.*

The man-
ner of stile
in our E-
vangelists.
*Mat. 21.
Mat. 2.
John 7.
Luke 19.*

*Mat. 15.
John 10.
11, & 20.*

Mark 10.

A special
point to be
observed in
our Evan-
gelists.

Mat. 10. imperfections of themselves, and of such others as they
Mark 14. principally respected. So *St. Matthew* names himself
Matthew the Publican. And so *St. Mark* being *Peter's*
 Disciple, records particularly how *Peter* denied his
AAs 15. master. *St. Luke*, that was scholar and dependent of
St. Paul, makes mention alone, of the little differences
 between *Paul* and *Barnabas* : and in the story of *St. Ste-*
phen's death, after all his narration ended, he adds a
AAs 7. clause, that in human judgment might have been left out,
 to wit : *Saulus erat consentiens neci ejus*. *Saul* was con-
 senting and culpable of *Stephen's* death. Whereby we
 may perceive most perpicuously, that as these men were
 plain, sincere, simple, and far from presuming to devise
 any thing of themselves : so were they religious, and had
 scruple to pass over or leave out any thing of the truth, in
 favour of themselves, or of any other whosoever.

These mens writings then, were publish'd and re-
 ceived for undoubted truth, by all that lived in the very
 same age, and were privy to the particulars therein
 contain'd. They were copied abroad into infinite mens
 hands ; and so conserved with all care and reverence,
 as holy and divine scripture. They were read in
 churches, throughout all countries and nations, ex-
 pounded, preach'd, and taught by all pastors : and
 commentaries made upon them by holy fathers, from
 time to time. So that no doubt can be made, that we
 have the very same writings incorrupt, as the authors
 left them : for it was impossible for any enemy to cor-
 rupt so many copies over all the world, without dis-
 covery and resistance. And the same very text, words,
 and sentences, which from age to age, the learned fa-
 thers do alledge out of these scriptures, we find them
 now, as they had them at that time. As for example,
St. John, that lived longest of all the Apostles and the
 Evangelists, had among other scholars and auditors,
Papias, *Ignatius*, and *Polycarpus* ; all which agree on the
 four Gospels, and other writings, left unto us in the new
 testament ; affirming *St. John* to have approved the same.

These

No doubt
 but that we
 have the
 true writ-
 ings of our
 Evange-
 lists.

These men were masters to *Justin Martyr*, *Ireneus*, and others, whose writings remain unto us. And if they did not; yet their sayings and judgments touching the scriptures, are recorded unto us by *Eusebius*, and other fathers of the next age after; and so from hand to hand until our days. So that of this, there can be no more doubt, than whether *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Jerusalem*, and other such renowned cities, known to all the world at this day, be the very same, whereof authors have treated so much in ancient times.

Euseb. l. 5. hist. c. 15.

And thus much of Christ's Evangelists; for whose more credit, and for confirmation of things by them recorded, his divine providence preordain'd, that infinite witnesses, whom we call martyrs, should offer up their blood in the primitive church, and after. Whereas for no other doctrine, profession, or religion in the world, the like was ever heard of; tho' among the *Jews*, in the time of the *Machabees*, and at some other times also, when the nation for their sins was afflicted by heathen princes, some few were barbarously and injuriously put to death; yet commonly and for the most part, this was rather of barbarous fury in the Pagans, for their resistance, than directly for hatred of *Jewish* religion. And for the number, there is no doubt, but that more Christians were put to death within two months, for their belief, throughout the world; than were of *Jews* in two thousand years before Christ's coming. Which is undoubtedly a matter very wonderful; considering, that the *Jewish* religion impugned no less the Pagan idolatry, than does the doctrine of the Christians. But this came to pass, that Christ's words might be fulfill'd, who said: *I come not to bring peace, but the sword.* And again: *I send you forth as sheep among wolves.* That is to say; to be torn and worried, and your blood to be devoured.

The fourth consideration of Martyrs.

Machab. l. 1. & 2.

Mat. 5. Mat. 10.

Three points to be considered in our Martyrs.

In which extream and most incredible suffering of Christians, three points are worthy of great consideration. The first, what infinite multitudes of all states,

See the narration of *Phileas* bishop in *Africa* touching this point, alledged by *Eusebius* l. 8. *bis*. c. 11 & 12.

The singular alacrity of Christians in their sufferings. *Tertul.* in *apolog.* c. 1.

conditions, sex, qualities, and age, did suffer daily for testimony of this truth. The second, what intolerable and unaccustom'd torments, not heard of in the world before, were devised by tyrants for afflicting this kind of people. The third, what invincible courage, and unspeakable alacrity the Christians shew'd, in bearing out these afflictions, which the enemies themselves could not attribute, but to some divine power and supernatural assistance.

And for this later point, of comfort in their sufferings, I will alledge only this point of *Tertullian* against the *Gentiles*, who objected, that wicked men suffered also, as well as Christians. Whereto this learned Doctor made answer in these words ; “ Truth it is, that many
“ men are prone to ill, and do suffer for the same :
“ but yet dare they not defend their evil to be good, as
“ Christians do their cause. For that every evil thing by
“ nature, does bring with it, either fear or shame: and
“ therefore we see, that malefactors, altho’ they love
“ evil ; yet would they not appear so to the world, but
“ desire rather to lie in covert. They tremble when
“ they are taken ; and when they are accused, they deny
“ all ; and do scarce oftentimes confess their doings
“ upon torments. And finally, when they are condemn’d, they lament, moan, and do impute their ill
“ fortune to destiny, or to the planets. But the Christian,
“ what does he like to this ? Is there any man ashamed :
“ or does any man repent him, when he is taken ;
“ except it be that he was not taken sooner ? if he be noted
“ by the enemy for a Christian ; he glories in the
“ same : if he be accused, he defends not himself : if
“ he be ask’d the question, he confesses it willingly :
“ if he be condemn’d, he yields thanks. What evil
“ is there then in this Christian cause, which has not
“ the natural sequel of evil ? I mean, fear, shame,
“ tergiversation, repentance, sorrow, and deploration ? ”
what evil, I say, can this be deem’d, whose guiltiness is joy ; whose accusation is desire ; whose punishment is happiness ?

Hitherto

Hitherto are the words of learned *Tertullian*, who was an eye witness of that he wrote, and had no small part in the cause of those that suffer'd; being himself in that place, and state, that daily he might expect to taste of the same affliction. To which combat how ready he was, may appear by divers places of this his apology, wherein he utters, besides his zeal and fervour, a most confident security, and certain assurance of Jesus's assistance, by what he had seen perform'd to infinite others in their greatest distresses, from the same Lord before. So that nothing does more ascertain us of the divine power and omnipotency of Jesus, than the invincible fortitude, which above all human reason, force, and nature, he imparted to his Martyrs.

Jesus's assistance to his Martyrs.

After which consideration, there comes to be weigh'd the fifth point before mention'd; which is, of the same power and omnipotency of Jesus, declared, and exercised upon the infernal spirits. Which thing, partly may appear by the oracles alledged in the end of the former section (wherein those spirits foretold that a *Hebrew* child should be born, to the utter subversion and ruin of their tyranical dominion) and much more at large, the same might be declared, by other answers and oracles utter'd after Christ's nativity, and register'd in the monuments, even of the heathens themselves. Whereof he that desires to see more ample mention (especially out of *Porphry*, who then was living) let him read *Eusebius's* sixth book, *De preparatione Evangelica*, where he shall find many; and namely, that *Apollo* many times exclaim'd: *Hei mihi, congemiscite! Hei mihi! Oraculorum deficit me claritas!* Wo unto me! lament you with me! wo unto me! the honour of oracles hath now forsaken me. Which complaints and lamentations are nothing else, but a plain confession, that Jesus was he, of whom a Prophet said divers ages before, *Attenuabit omnes Deos terræ*: he shall wear out, and bring to beggary all the Gods or Idols of the earth. This confess'd also the wicked

The fifth consideration. The subjection of spirits.

Sopho 2.

wicked spirits themselves, when at Christ's appearing in *Jury*, they came unto him at divers times, and besought him, not to afflict or torment them; nor command them presently to return to hell: but rather to permit them some little time of entertainment in the sea, or mountains, or among herds of swine, or the like. Which confession they made in the sight of all the world; and declared the same afterwards by their facts and deeds.

Of the miraculous
ceasing of
oracles at
Christ's
appearing.

For presently upon Jesus's death, and upon the preaching of his Name, and Gospel throughout the world, the oracles, which before were abundant in every province and country, were put to silence. Whereof I might alledge the testimonies of very many *Gentiles* themselves, as that of *Juvenal*:

Juv. Satyr. 6.

Cessant Oracula Delphis,

All oracles at *Delphos*, do now cease, &c. That also of another Poet:

Lucan.

*Excessere omnes adytis, arisque relictis
Dii quibus imperium hoc steterat, &c.*

*Strab. l. 7.
Geograph.*

That is: the Gods, by whom this empire stood, are all departed from their temples; and have abandon'd their altars, and places of habitation. *Strabo* also hath these express words: *The Oracle of Delphos, at this day, is to be seen in extream beggary and mendicity.*

*Plutar. de
perfect.
Oracul.*

And finally, *Plutarch*, that lived within one hundred years after Christ, made a special book, to search out the causes, why the oracles of the Gods were ceased in his time. And after much turning, and winding many ways, resolved upon two principal points, as causes thereof. The first, that in his time there were more wisemen than before, whose answers might stand instead of oracles: and the other, that peradventure the spirits, which were accustomed to yield oracles, were by length of time grown old, and dead. Both which

Two sufficient causes

reasons

reasons in the common sense of all men must needs be false; and by *Plutarch* himself, cannot stand with probability. For first, in his books, which he wrote of the lives of ancient famous men, he confesses, that in such kind of wisdom, as he most esteem'd, they had not their equals among their posterity. Secondly, in his treatises of philosophy, he passes it for a ground: that spirits, not depending of material bodies, cannot die, or wax old: and therefore of necessity we must conclude, that some other cause is to be yielded, of the ceasing of these oracles; which cannot be but the presence and commandment of some higher power, according to the saying of *St John*: *To this end appeared the Son of God, that he might dissolve (or overthrow) the works of the devil.* 1 John 3.

Neither did Jesus this alone, in his own person; but gave also power and authority to his Disciples and followers to do the like; according to their commission in *St. Matthew's Gospel*: *He gave them power over unclean spirits that they should cast them out.* Which commission, how they afterwards put in execution, the whole world yields testimony. And for example sake only, I will alledge in this place, an offer or challenge made, for proof thereof, by *Tertullian*, to the heathen magistrates and persecutors of his time: his words are these. *Let there be brought here in presence before your tribunal seats some person, who is certainly known to be possess'd with a wicked spirit: and let that spirit be commanded by a Christian to speak; and he shall as truly confess himself to be a devil; as at other times, to you he will falsely say, that he is a God. Again at the same time, let there be brought forth one of these (your Priests or Prophets) that will seem to be possess'd by divine spirit; I mean of those that speak gasping, &c. (In whom you imagine your Gods to talk) and except that spirit also (commanded by us) do confess himself to be a devil (being indeed afraid to lie unto a Christian) do you shed the blood of the Christians in that very place, &c. None will lie to their* Tertul. in Apolog. ad gentes.

A most confident offer made by Tertullian.

own shame, but rather for honour or advantage: yet those spirits will not say to us, that Christ was a magician, as you do: nor that he was of the common condition of men. They will not say he was stohn out of his sepulchre: but they will confess, that he was the virtue, wisdom, and word of God; that he is in Heaven; and that he shall come again to be our judge, &c. Neither will these devils, in our presence, deny themselves to be unclean spirits, and damned for their wickedness; and that they expect his most horrible judgment: professing also that they do fear Christ in God, and God in Christ; and that they are made subject unto his servants.

Hitherto are the words of *Tertullian*, containing, as I have said, a most confident challenge; and that upon the lives and blood of all Christians, to make trial of their power in controlling those spirits, which the *Romans*, and other *Gentiles* adored as their Gods. Which offer; seeing it was made and exhibited to the persecutors themselves, then living in *Rome*; well may we be assured, that the enemy would never have omitted so notorious an advantage, if, by former experience, he had not been persuaded, that the joining herein would have turned, and redounded to his own confusion.

And this puissant authority of Jesus imparted to Christians, extended it self so far, that not only their words and commands, but even their very presence did shut the mouths, and drive into fear these miserable spirits. So *Laëtantius* shews, that in his days, among many other examples of this thing, a silly serving man, that was a Christian, following his master into a certain temple of idols; the Gods cried out, that nothing could well be done, as long as that Christian was in presence. The like records *Eusebius* of *Dioclesian* the emperor, who going to *Apollo* for an oracle, received answer: *That the just men were cause, that he could say nothing.* Which just men, *Apollo's* priest interpreted, to be meant ironically of Christians; and thereupon, *Dioclesian* began his most cruel, and fierce persecution.

The wonderful authority of Christians over spirits
Laët. l. 4. div. Instit. cap. 19.

Euf. l. 5. de præ. Evang.

persecution in *Eusebius's* days. *Sozomenus* also writes, that *Julian* the apostate endeavouring, with many sacrifices and conjurations, to draw an answer from *Apollo Daphneus*, in a famous place called *Daphne*, in the suburbs of *Antioch*; understood at last by the oracle, the bones of *St. Babylas* the martyr, that lay near to that place, were the impediment why that God could not speak. And thereupon, *Julian* presently caused the same body to be removed. And finally, hence it proceeded, that in all sacrifices, conjurations, and other mysteries of the *Gentiles*, there was brought in that phrase, recorded by scoffing *Lucian*: *Exeant Christiani*: let Christians depart: for while they were present, nothing could be well accomplish'd.

Sozom. l. 3. hist. c. 18.

Lucian in Alex.

To conclude, the Pagan *Porphyry*, that of all others, most earnestly endeavour'd to impugn, and disgrace us Christians, and to hold up the honour of his enieebled idols: yet, discoursing of the great plague, that raged most furiously in the city of *Messina* in *Sicily*, where he dwelt; gives this reason, why *Æsculapius* the God of physick, much adored in that place, was not able to help them. *It is no marvel (says he) if this city so many years be vex'd with the plague; seeing that both Æsculapius, and all other Gods be now departed from it, by the coming of Christians. For since men have begun to worship this Jesus, we could never obtain any profit by our God.* Thus much confess'd this patron of Paganism, concerning the overthrow, that his Gods had received by *Jesus* being honor'd. Which tho' he spoke with a malicious mind, to bring Christians in hatred and persecution thereby; yet is the confession notable; and confirms that story, which *Plutarch* in his forenamed book does report: that in the later years of *Tiberius's* reign, a strange and exceeding horrible clamor, with hideous cries, screeches, and howlings, was heard by many in the *Grecian* sea, complaining, that the great God *PAN* was now departed. And this, *Plutarch*, that was a *Gentile*, affirms to have been alledged, and proved before

Porph. l. 1. con. Christ. apud. us. l. 5. c. 1. de præp. Evan.

A marvelous confession of *Porphyry*.

A pretty story of *Plutarch*.

Plutarch. in deificu Oracul.

fore the emperor *Tiberius*; who marvell'd greatly; and could not, by all his divines and sough-fayers, whom he call'd to that consultation, gather out any reasonable meaning of this wonderful accident. But we Christians, comparing the time wherein it happen'd, unto the time of Jesus's death and passion; and finding the same fully to agree, may more than probably persuade our selves; that by the death of their great God PAN (which signifies ALL) was imported the ruin and utter overthrow of all the wicked spirits, and idols upon earth.

The sixth
considera-
tion. The
punish-
ment of
enemies.

And thus has the Deity of Jesus been declared and proved by his omnipotent power, in subduing infernal enemies. Now remains it for us to make manifest the same, by his like power and divine justice, shew'd upon divers of his enemies here on earth: whose greatest punishment, tho', for the most part, he reserves for the life to come; yet sometimes, for manifestation of his omnipotency (as especially it was convenient in those first days of his appearance in the world) he chastises them also, even here on earth, in the eye and sight of all men. So we read of the most infamous and miserable death of *Herod* the first, surnamed *Ascalonita*; who, after his persecution of Christ in his infancy, and the slaughter of the infants in *Bethlehem* for his sake; was wearied out by a loathsome life, in fear and horror of his own wife and children; whom after he had most cruelly murder'd, was forced also by despair through his unspeakable vexations, griefs, and torments, to offer his own hand to his own destruction; if he had not been staid by friends, that stood about him.

I.
Herod As-
calonita.
Joseph. l.
17. antiq.
c. 10. &
lib. 1. de
bel. Jud.
cap. 21.

II.
Archelaus
Joseph. l.
17. antiq.
c. 15. l. 2. de
bel. Jud.
c. 6.

After him, *Archelaus* his eldest son, that was a terror to St. *Joseph* at his return from *Ægypt*, fell also, by God's justice, into marvellous calamities. For first, being left as king by his father; *Augustus* would not allow or ratify that succession; but of a king, made him a tetrach: assigning to him only the fourth part of that dominion, which his father had before. And then
again,

again, after nine years space, took that away in like manner, with the greatest dishonour he could devise; seizing upon all his treasure and riches, by way of confiscation; and condemning his person to perpetual banishment; where he died most miserably in *Vienna* in *France*.

Not long after this, the second son of *Herod* the first, named *Herod Antipas*, tetrarch of *Galilee*, who put *St. John Baptist* to death, and scorn'd *Jesus* before his passion (whereat both himself and *Herodias* his concubine were present) was deposed by *Cajus* the emperor (being accused by *Agrippa* his nearest kinsman) and most contumeliously sent in exile, first to *Lyons* in *France*; and after that to the most desert and inhabitable place of *Spain*; where he with *Herodias* wander'd up and down in extream calamity, as long as they lived; and finally ended their days, abandon'd of all men. Concerning which it is also recorded, that the dancing daughter of *Herodias*, who had in her jollity demanded *John Baptist's* head; being on a certain time forced to pass over a frozen river; the ice broke, and she in her fall had her head cut off, by the same ice, without hurting the rest of her body, to the great admiration of all the lookers on.

The like event had another of *Herod's* family, named *Herod Agrippa*, the accuser of the aforesaid *Herod* the tetrarch; who in his great glory and triumph, having put to death *St. James*, the brother of *St. John* Evangelist, and imprison'd *St. Peter*; was soon after in a publick assembly of princes and nobles at *Cesarea*, struck from heaven with a most horrible disease, whereby his body putrified, and was eaten with vermin; as both *St. Luke* reports, and *Josephus* confirms. And the same *Josephus*, with no small marvel in himself, declares, that at the very time when he wrote his history, (which was about seventy years after the death of *Herod* the first) the whole progeny and offspring, kindred, and family of the said *Herod*, which he says was exceeding

III.

Herod Antipas.

Joseph. l. 18. ant. c. 9. l. 2 de bel. c. 8.

Niceph. l. 4. cap. 20.

IV.

Herodias daughter.

V.

Herod Agrippa.

Acts 12.

Joseph. l. 19. antiq. c. 7. lib. 18. c. 7.

The stock
of *Herod*
soon extin-
guish'd.

ing great, by reason he had nine wives together, with many children, brothers, sisters, nephews, and kinsfolk, were all extinguish'd in most miserable sort, and gave a testimony, says *Josephus*, to the world, of the most vain confidence, that men do put in human felicity.

The pu-
nishment
of *Romans*.

And as the punishment lighted openly upon Jesus's profess'd enemies in *Jury*; so escaped not also the *Romans* their chastisement; I mean such as especially had their hands in persecution of him, or of his followers after him. For first, of *Pontius Pilate*, that gave sentence of death against him, we read; that after great disgrace received in *Jury*, he was sent home into *Italy*, and there, by manifold disfavours shew'd unto him by the emperor his master, fell into such despair, that he slew himself with his own hands.

VI.
Pilate.

Eutrop. l. 7.
hist. Euseb.
l. 2. c. 7.
hist.

Tertul. in
Apolog.

VI.
Caligula.

VII.
Nero.

And secondly, of the very emperors themselves, who lived from *Tiberius*, under whom Jesus suffer'd; unto *Constantine* the Great, under whom Christian religion took dominion over the world, (which contain'd the space of three hundred years) very few or none escaped the manifest scourges of God's dreadful justice shew'd upon them, at the ending of their days. For example's sake, *Tiberius*, that permitted Christians to live freely, and made a law against their molestation, as before has been shew'd, died peaceably in his bed. But *Caligula* that follow'd him; for his contempt shew'd against all divine power, in making himself a God; was soon murder'd by the conspiracy of his dearest friends. *Nero* also, who first of all others began persecution against the Christians; within few months after he had put *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* to death in *Rome*, having murder'd in like manner his own mother, brother, wife, and master, was upon the sudden, from his glorious state and majesty, thrown down into horrible distress and confusion, in the sight of all men: as being condemn'd by the senate, to have his head thrust into a pillory, and there most ignominiously to be

be whipp'd to death : was constrain'd, for avoiding the execution of that terrible sentence, to massacre himself with his own hands, by the assistance of such as were dearest unto him.

The like may be shew'd in the tragical ends of *Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Domitian, Comodus, Pertinax, Julian, Macrinus, Antonius, Alexander, Maximinus, Gordianus, Aurelianus, Decius, Gallus, Volusianus, Æmelianus, Valerianus, Gallienus, Cajus, Carinus, Maximianus, Maxentius, Licinius*, and others, whose miserable deaths, a nobleman and counsellor, near a thousand years past, did gather, against *Zosimus* a heathen writer, to shew thereby the powerful hand of Jesus upon his enemies; adding further, that since the time of *Constantine*, whilst emperors have been Christians, few or no such examples can be shew'd, except it be upon *Julian* the apostate, *Valens* the Arian heretick, or some other of like detestable notorious wickedness. And thus much of particular men chastised by Jesus.

But if we desire to have a full example of his justice upon a whole nation together: let us consider what befel *Jerusalem*, and the people of *Jury*, for their barbarous cruelty practis'd upon him, in his death and passion. And truly if we believe *Josephus* and *Philo*, the *Jewish* historiographers (who lived either with Christ, or immediately after him) it can be hardly express'd by the tongue, or pen of man, what insufferable calamities and miseries were inflicted on that people, presently after the ascension of Jesus, by *Pilate* their governor, under *Tiberius* the emperor; and then again by *Petrinus*, under *Caligula*; and after that by *Cumanus*, under *Claudius*; and lastly, by *Festus* and *Albinus*, under *Nero*. Through whose cruelties that nation was forced finally to rebel and take arms against the *Roman* empire, which was the cause of their utter ruin and extirpation by *Titus* and *Vespasian*. At what time, besides the overthrow of their city, burning of their temple, and other infinite

VIII.
Many emperors that died miserably.
Evagrius Scholast. l. 3. hist. c. 41

IX.
The chastisement of *Jerusalem*, and of the *Jewish* people.

Josep. l. 19. ant. l. 2. § 3. de bel. Judai. Philo. in Flacco & l. 2. q. leg. Cotnel. Tac. l. 12.

distresses, which *Josephus* an eye witness protests, that no speech or human discourse can declare: the same author records eleven hundred thousand persons to have been slain, and fourscore and seventeen thousand taken alive; who were either put to death afterwards in publick triumphs, or sold openly for bond-slaves into all the world.

How
Christ's
death was
punish'd,
with like
circum-
stances up-
on the
Jews.

Jos. p. l. 5.
de bel. c. 8.

Cap. 27.

Lib. 5. de
bel. c. 28.

And in this universal calamity of the *Jewish* nation, being the most notorious and grievous that ever happen'd to nation or people, before or after them (for the *Romans* never practis'd the like upon others) it is singularly to be observed, that in the same time and place, in which they had put Jesus to death before; that is, in the feast of their Paschal, when their whole nation was assembled at *Jerusalem* from all parts, provinces, and countries of the earth: they received this their most piteous subversion, and that by the hands of the *Roman Cæsars*, to whom by publick cry, they had appeal'd from Jesus but a little before. Yea, further it is to be observed and noted, that as they apprehended Jesus; and made the entrance to his passion upon the mount Olivet: so *Titus*, as *Josephus* writes, upon the same mount planted his first siege for their final destruction. And as they led Jesus from *Caiphas* to *Pilate*, afflicting him in their presence: so now were themselves led up and down from *John* to *Simon* (two tyrants that had usurped dominion within the city) and were scourged and tormented before their tribunal seats. Again, as they had caus'd Jesus to be scoff'd, beaten, and villanously treated by the soldiers, in *Pilate's* palace: so were now their own principal rulers and noblemen (as *Josephus* notes) most scornfully abused, beaten, and crucified by the same soldiers. Which latter point of crucifying, or villanous putting to death upon the cross, was began to be practis'd by the *Romans*, upon the *Jewish* gentry, immediately after Christ's death, and not before. And now at this time of the war, *Josephus* affirms, " that in some one day, five hundred of his
" nation

“ nation were taken and put to this opprobrious kind
 “ of punishment ; infomuch ; that, for the great mul-
 “ titude, said he, *Nec locus sufficeret Crucibus, nec Cru-*
 “ *ces corporibus* : that is, neither the place was sufficient
 “ to contain so many crosses (as the *Romans* set up) nor
 “ the crosses sufficient to sustain so many bodies, as
 “ they murder’d by that torment.”

This dreadful and unspeakable misery, fell upon the *Jews*, about forty years after *Jesus’s* ascension, when they had shew’d themselves most obstinate and obdurate against his doctrine, deliver’d unto them, not only by himself, but also by his Disciples ; of which Disciples they had slain *St. Stephen* and *St. James* ; and had driven into banishment both *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, and others that had preach’d unto them. To which later two Apostles, (I mean *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*) our Saviour *Jesus* appear’d a little before their martyrdom in *Rome*, (as *Lactantius* writes) and shew’d that within three or four years after their death, he was to take revenge upon their nation, by the utter destruction of *Jerusalem*, and of that generation. Which secret advice, the said *Lactantius* affirms, that *Peter* and *Paul* reveal’d to other Christians in *Jury* ; whereby it came to pass, (as *Eusebius* also and other authors do mention) that all the Christians living in *Jerusalem*, departed thence, not long before the siege began, to a certain town named *Pella* beyond *Jordan*, which was assign’d unto them for that purpose, by *Jesus* himself, for that it being in the dominion of *Agrippa*, (who stood with the *Romans*) it remain’d in peace and safety, while all *Jury* besides was brought to desolation.

This was the providence of God for the punishment of the *Jews* at that time. And ever after, their state declin’d from worse to worse ; and their miseries daily multiply’d throughout the world. Whereof, he that will see a very lamentable narration ; let him read but the last book only of *Josephus’s* history *de bello Judaico*, wherein is reported, besides other things, that

Lib. 4. divin. Inst. c. 21. Euseb. l. 3. cap. 5. Nicoph. 3.

A marvellous providence of God for delivering the Christians that were in *Jerusalem* at the time of the destruction.

The *Jewish* miseries after the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

after the war was ended, and all publick slaughter ceased; *Titus* sent sixteen thousand *Jews*, as a present to his father at *Rome*, there to be put to death in divers and fundry manners. Others he apply'd to be spectacles for pastime at the *Romans*, that were present with him; whereof *Josephus* says, that he saw with his own eyes, two thousand and five hundred murther'd and consumed in one day, by fight and combat among themselves, and with wild beasts at the emperor's appointment. Others were assign'd in *Antioch*, and other great cities, to serve for faggots in their famous bonfires at times of triumph. Others were sold to be bondslaves: others condemn'd to dig and hew stones for ever. And this was the end of that war and desolation. After this again, under *Trajan* the emperor, there was such infinite numbers of *Jews* slain and made away by *Marcus Turbo* in *Africa*, and *Lucius Quintus* in the East; that all histories agree, that it is impossible to express the multitude. But yet it is more wonderful, what the same historians do report; that in the eighteenth year of *Adrian* the emperor, one *Julius Severus* being sent, to extinguish all the remnant of the *Jewish* generation: destroy'd in a small time nine hundred and eighty towns and villages, within that country, and slew five hundred and fourscore thousand of that blood and nation in one day: at which time also he beat down the city of *Jerusalem* in such sort; as he left not one stone standing upon another of their ancient buildings; but caused some part thereof to be re-edified again, and inhabited only by *Gentiles*. He changed the name of the city, and called it * *Ælia*, after the emperor's name. He drove all the progeny and offspring of the *Jews* from off all those countries, with a perpetual law confirm'd by the emperor, that they should never return; no, not so much as look back from any high or eminent place, to that country again. And this was done to that *Jewish* nation by the *Roman* emperors, for accomplishing that demand, which their principal elders had made

*Joseph. l. 7.
de bel. c. 20
& 21.*

The final
desolation
of the
Jewish
nations.

*Oros. 7.
c. 13.
Ariston
pellous in
hist. Euseb.
l. 4. c. 8.
Niceph. l. 3.
c. 24.*

* The em-
peror's
name was
*Ælius A-
drianus.*

made, not long before, to *Pilate* the Roman magistrate, concerning Jesus most injurious death ; crying out with one consent and voice ; to wit : *Let his blood be upon us, and upon our posterity.* *Mat. 25.*

And herein also (I mean in the most wonderful and notorious chastisement, or rather reprobation of this *Jewish* people, which of all the world was God's peculiar before) is set out unto us, as it were in a glass, the seventh and last point, which we mention'd in the beginning of this section : to wit, the fulfilling of such speeches and prophecies, as Jesus utter'd when he was upon earth : as namely at one time, after a long and vehement commination, made to the scribes, pharisees, and principal men of that nation, (in which he repeated eight several times the dreadful threat, *wo*) he concludes finally, that all the just blood, injuriously shed, from the first Martyr *Abel*, should be revenged very shortly upon that generation. And in the same place, he menaces the populous city of *Jerusalem*, that it should be made desert. And in another place, he assures them, that one stone should not be left standing thereof upon another. And yet further he pronounced upon the same city, these words : *The days shall come upon thee, that thy enemies shall environ thee with a trench, and shall besiege thee ; they shall straiten thee on every side, and shall beat thee to the ground, and thy children in thee.* And yet more particularly, he foretels the very signs, whereby his Disciples should perceive when the time was come indeed ; using this speech unto them. *When you shall see Jerusalem besieged with an army : then know ye, that her desolation is at hand ; --- for that these are the days of revenge, to the end all may be fulfilled which is written. --- Great distress shall fall upon the land, and vengeance upon this people. They shall be slain by dint of the sword, and shall be led captives into all countries. And Jerusalem shall be trodden under feet by the Gentiles, until the times of nations be accomplished.*

The seventh consideration. The fulfilling of Jesus's prophecies.

Mat. 2. 3.

Luke 21.

Luke 19.

Jesus's speeches of *Jerusalem*

Luke 21.

The circumstances of the time, when Jesus spoke his words, and when they were written.

Luke 19.

This Jesus foretold of the misery, that was to fall upon *Jerusalem*, and upon that people, by the *Romans* and other *Gentiles*, when the *Jews* seem'd to be most in security and greatest amity with the *Romans*, (as also they were, when the same things were written) and consequently, at that time, they might seem in all human reason, to have less cause than ever before, to misdoubt such calamities. And yet how certain and assured foreknowledge, and as it were most sensible foreseeing, Jesus had of these miseries, he declared, not only by these express words, and by their event; but also by those piteous tears, he shed upon sight and consideration of *Jerusalem*; and by the lamentable speech, he used to the women of that city, who wept for him at his passion; persuading them, to weep rather for themselves, and for their children, in respect of the miseries to follow, than for him.

Luke 22.

Which words and prediction of Jesus, together with sundry other speeches, foreshewing so particularly the eminent calamities of that nation; and as I have said, at such time, when in human appearance there could be no probability thereof, when a certain heathen chronicler and mathematick, named *Pblegon*, about an hundred years after Christ's departure, had diligently consider'd; having seen the same also in his days most exactly fulfill'd (for he was servant to *Adrianus* the emperor, by whose command, as has been said before, the final subversion of the *Jewish* nation was brought to pass) this *Pblegon*, I say, though a Pagan; yet upon consideration of these events, and others that he saw, (as the extream persecution of Christians foretold by Christ, and the like) he pronounced, that never any man foretold things so certainly to come, or that so precisely were accomplish'd, as were the predictions and prophecies of Jesus. And this testimony of *Pblegon*, was alleged and urged for Christians, against one *Celsus* a heathen philosopher; and *Epicure*, by the famous learned *Origen*, even the very next age after.

*Pbreg.
Thralli.
lib. Annal.*

The testimony of a heathen for the fulfilling of Christ's prophecies.

*Orig. lib. 2
cont. Cels.
sup. initium.*

after it was written by the author; so that of the truth of this allegation, there can be no doubt or question at all.

And now altho' these predictions and prophecies, concerning the punishment and reprobation of the *Jews*, fulfill'd so evidently in the sight of all the world, might be a sufficient demonstration of Jesus's foreknowledge in affairs to come: yet are there many other things besides foreshew'd by him, which fell out as exactly, as did these; notwithstanding that by no learning mathematical reason, or human conjecture, they were or might be foreseen. As for example: the foretelling of his own death; the manner, time, and place thereof: as also the person that should betray him, together with his irrepentant end. The flight, fear and scandal of his Disciples, tho' they had promised and protested the contrary. The three several denials of *Peter*. The particular time of his own resurrection, and ascension. The sending of the Holy Ghost; and many other the like predictions, prophecies, and promises, to his Apostles, Disciples and Followers, who heard them utter'd, and left them written before they fell out, and saw them afterwards accomplish'd; and who by the falshood thereof would have received great damage if they had not been true: to these men, I say, they were most evident proofs of Jesus's divine presence in matters that should ensue.

Other prophecies of Jesus fulfill'd to his Disciples.

But yet because an infidel, with whom only I suppose myself to deal in this place, may in these and the like things find perhaps some matter of cavillation; and say, that these prophecies of Jesus were recorded by our Evangelists, after the particularities therein prophesied were effectuated, and not before: and consequently, that they might be forged. I will alledge certain other events, both foretold and register'd before they came to pass, and divulged by publick writings in the face of all the world, when there was small appearance that ever the same would take effect. Such were the particular

Prophecies fulfill'd in the sight of *Gentiles*.

foretelling of the kind and manner of *St. Peter's* death, whilst yet he lived. The peculiar and different manner of *St. John* the Evangelist's ending, from the rest of the Apostles. The prerogative given to *Peter* above the rest, that his faith and chair should never fail, which we see miraculously verify'd even unto this day; the successions of all other Apostles having fail'd; and his, not. The foreshewing and describing to his Disciples the most extream and cruel persecutions, that should ensue unto Christians for his sake; a thing at that time not probable in reason, for the *Romans* permitted the exercise of all kinds of religion: and that, notwithstanding in all these pressures and intolerable afflictions, his faithful followers should not shrink, but hold out, and daily increase in zeal, fortitude, and number; and finally, should atchieve the victory and conquest of all the world: a thing much more unlikely at that day, and so far surpassing all human probability, that no capacity, reason, or conceit of man could reach or attain the foresight thereof.

And with this we will conclude our third and last part of the general division set down in the beginning, concerning the grounds and proofs of Christian religion,

S E C T. V.

The CONCLUSION.

The sum
of the for-
mer four
Sections.

BY all that hitherto has been said, we have declared and made manifest unto thee, gentle reader, three things of great importance.

First, that from the beginning and creation of the world, there has been promised in all times and ages, a *Messias* or Saviour of mankind; in whom, and by whom, all nations should be bless'd: as also, that the particular time, manner, and circumstance of his coming, together with the quality of his person, purpose, doctrine, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, were
in

in like manner by the Prophets of God most evidently foreflew'd.

Secondly, that the very same particulars and special points, that were design'd and set down by the said Prophets; were also fulfill'd most exactly, with their circumstances, in the person, and actions of Jesus our Saviour.

Thirdly, that besides the accomplishment of all the foresaid prophecies, there were given by Jesus, many signs, manifestations, and most infallible arguments of his Deity and omnipotent puissance, after his ascension or departure from all human and corporal conversation in this world. By all which ways, means, arguments, and proofs, and by ten thousand more, which to the tongue or pen of man are inexplicable; the Christian's mind remains settled, and most firmly grounded in the undoubted belief of his religion: having (besides all other things, evidences, certainties, and internal comforts and assurances which are infinite) these eight demonstrative reasons and persuasions, which ensue, for his more ample and abundant satisfaction therein. Eight reasons.

I. It is impossible so many things should be foretold so precisely, with so many particularities, in so many ages, by so different persons all of sanctity, with so great concord, consent, and unity, and that so long before hand; but by the spirit of God alone, that only has foreknowledge of future events. The Prophecies.

II. It could not possibly be, that so many things so difficult and strange, with all their particularities and circumstances, should be so exactly and precisely fulfill'd; but in him alone, of whom they were truly meant. The fulfilling.

III. It can no ways be imagined, that God would ever have concurr'd with Jesus's doings, or assisted him, above all course of nature, with so abundant miracles, as the *Gentiles* do confess that he wrought; if he had been a seducer, or taken upon him to set forth a false doctrine. God's assistance.

Jesus's
doctrine.

IV. If Jesus had intended to deceive the world; he would never have proposed a doctrine so difficult and repugnant to all sensuality: but rather would have taught things pleasant and grateful to man's voluptuous delight, as *Mahomet* after him. Neither could the nature of man, have ever so affectuously embraced such austerity; without the assistance of some divine and supernatural power.

Jesus's
manner of
teaching.

V. Jesus being poorly born and unlearn'd, as by his adversaries confession does appear; and in such an age, and time when all worldly learning was in most flourishing condition; he could never possibly, but by divine power, have attain'd to such exquisite knowlegde in all kind of learning, as to be able to decide all the doubts and controversies of philosophers before him, as he did; laying down more plainly, distinctly, and perspicuously, the pith of all human and divine learning, within the compass of three years teaching (and that to auditors of so great simplicity) than did all the sages of the world until that day; insomuch, that even then, the most unlearned Christian of that time, could say more in certainty of truth, concerning the knowledge of God, the creation of the world, the end of man, the reward of virtue, the punishment of vice, the immortality of our soul and its state after this life, and in such other high points and mysteries of true philosophy; than could the most famous and learned of all the *Gentiles*, that had for so many ages before beaten their brains in contention about the same.

Jesus's life
and man-
ner of pro-
ceeding.

VI. If Jesus had not meant plainly, and sincerely in all his doings, according as he profess'd, he would never have taken so severe a course of life to himself; neither would he have refused all temporal dignities and advancements as he did; he would never have chosen to die so opprobriously in the sight of all men; nor made election of Apostles and Disciples so poor and contemptible in the world; nor, if he had, would ever worldly men have follow'd him in so great multitudes,
with

with so great fervour, zeal, constancy, and perseverance unto death.

VII. We see that the first beginners and founders of Christian religion left by Jesus, were a multitude of simple and unskilful persons, unapt to deceive or devise any thing of themselves. They began against all probability of human reason ; they went forward against the stream and strength of all the world ; they continued and encreased above human possibility ; they persever'd in insufferable torments and afflictions ; they wrought miracles above the reach and compass of man's ability ; they overthrew idolatry that then possess'd the world ; and confounded all infernal powers, by the only name and virtue of their master : they saw the prophecies of Jesus fulfill'd, and all his divine speeches and predictions come to pass : they saw the punishment of their enemies and chief impugnors to fall upon them in their days : they saw every day whole provinces, countries and kingdoms converted to their faith : and finally, the whole *Roman* empire, and world besides, to subject it self to the law, obedience, and gospel of their master.

The beginners and first publishers of Christian religion.

VIII. Among all other reasons and arguments, this may be one most manifest unto us ; that whereas by many testimonies and express prophecies of the old testament, it is affirm'd, that the people of *Israel* should abandon, persecute, and put to death the true *Messias* at his coming, as before has been shew'd ; and for that fact, should it self be abandon'd by God, and brought to ruin and dispersion over all the world (wherein, according to the words of *Hosea* : *They shall sit for a long time, without king, without prince, without sacrifice, without altar, without ephod, and without theraphim ; and after this again shall return and seek their God --- in the last days*) we see in this age the very same particularities fulfill'd in that nation, and so to have continued now for these fifteen hundred years : that is, we see the *Jewish* people abandon'd and afflicted above all nations of the world ; dispersed in servility throughout

The present state of *Jews*.

Hosea 3.

throughout all corners of other nations; without dignity or reputation; without king, prince, or commonwealth of themselves; prohibited by all princes, both Christian and others, to make their sacrifices where they inhabit; deprived of all means to attain to knowledge in good literature, whereby daily they fall into more gross ignorance and absurdities against common reason in their latter doctrine, than did the most barbarous infidels that ever were; having lost all sense and feeling in spiritual affairs; all knowledge and understanding in celestial things for the life to come; having among them no prophet, no grave teacher, no man directed by God's holy Spirit; and finally, as men forlorn, and fill'd with all kind of misery, do, both by their inward, and external calamities, preach, denounce, and testify to the world, that Jesus, whom they crucify'd, was the only true Messias and Saviour of mankind; and that his blood, as they required, lies heavily upon their generation for ever.

The conclusion of the chapter, with an admonishment.

Jesus shall be also a judge.

Apud Euseb. lib. 4. in vit. Const. in f.

Wherefore, to conclude this whole discourse and treatise of the proofs and evidences of our Christian religion: seeing that by so manifold and invincible demonstrations it has been declared and laid before our eyes, that Jesus is the only true Saviour and Redeemer of the world; and consequently, that his service and religion is the only way and means to please almighty God, and to attain everlasting happiness; there remains now to consider, that the same Jesus, who by so many Prophets was promised to be a Saviour, was foretold by the self same Prophets, that he should be a judge and examiner of all our actions. Which latter point, no one Prophet, that has foreshew'd his coming, has omitted to inculcate seriously unto us: no, not the *Sibyls* themselves, who in every place where they describe the most gracious coming of the Virgin's Son, do also annex thereunto his dreadful appearance at the day of Judgment; especially in those famous acrostick verses, whereof there has been so much mention before; the

the whole discourse upon the words, *Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Saviour, and Cross*, containing nothing else, but a large and ample description of his most terrible coming in fire, and flame, and conflagration of the world at that dreadful day, to take account of all mens words, actions, and thoughts.

To which description of these Pagan Prophets, the whole tenor and context of the old Bible is consonant, foreshewing every where the dreadful majesty, terror, and severity of the Messias at that day. The New Testament also, which tends wholly to comfort and solace mankind, and has the name of *Evangel*, in respect of joyful news which it brought to the world; omits not to put us continually in mind of this point. And to that end, both Jesus himself, amidst all his sweet and comfortable speeches with his Disciples did admonish them often of this last day: and his Apostles, Evangelists, and Disciples after him, repeated, iterated, and urged this important consideration in all their words and writings.

Wherefore, as by the name and thought of a Saviour, we are greatly stirr'd up to joy, alacrity, confidence, and consolation; so by this admonishment of God's Saints, and of Jesus himself, that he is to be our judge, and severe examiner of all the minutes and moments of our life, we are to conceive just fear and dread of this his second coming. And as by the whole former treatise we have been instructed, that the only way to salvation is by the profession of Jesus's religion: so by this account, that shall be demanded at our hands at the last day, by the author and first institutor of this religion, we are taught, that unless we be true Christians indeed, and do perform such duties as this law and religion prescribes unto us; so far shall we be from receiving any benefit by the name; that our judgment will be more grievous, and our final calamity more intolerable. For which cause, I would in sincere charity, exhort every man, that by the former discourse

has

1 Reg. 2.
Psal. 95.
Isa. 2. 13,
26, 27, 30.
Jer. 30.
Dan. 7.
Sopbo. 1.
Malac. 4.
Mat. 12,
13, 16,
24, 25.
Mark 13:
Luke 17.
Rom. 2. 14.
1 Cor. 15.
2 Cor. 5.
1 Thes. 4. 5.
2 Thes. 1.
1 Tim. 2.
2 Pet. 3.
Heb. 9.
Jude 15.
Apoc. 1.

An illation
upon the
premises,
with an
exhorta-
tion.

has received any light, and is confirm'd in his judgment concerning the truth of Christian religion, to employ his whole endeavours for the attaining of the fruit and benefit thereof; which is, by being a true and real Christian; for Christ himself foresignify'd, that many should take the name without profiting by their profession. And to the end each man may the better know or conjecture of himself, whether he be in the right way or no, and whether he perform in deed the duty required of a true Christian; I have thought convenient to adjoin this chapter next following of that matter; and therein to declare the particular points belonging to that profession. Which being known, it will be easy for every one, that is not over partial or wilfully bent to deceive himself, to discern his own state; and the course and way that he holds. Which is a high point of wisdom for all men to do, while they have time; least at the latter day, we having pass'd over our lives in the bare name only of Christianity, without the substance, do find our selves in the number of those most unfortunate people, who shall cry Lord! Lord! and receive no comfort by that confession.

C H A P. V.

How the end whereunto Man was created, may be attain'd by us, and the duties belonging thereunto. With a declaration of the two general parts whereunto all those duties may be reduced, which are Faith and good Works.

SECT. I. Concerning FAITH.

AS in human learning and sciences of this world, after having shewn the end whereunto they tend, and are directed; the next point is to declare the means whereby that may be obtain'd: so, much more,

more, in this divine and heavenly doctrine of Christian religion which concerns our soul, and everlasting salvation. Having shew'd before that the final end for which man was created and placed in this world, was, and is, that he should employ himself in the service of God, and thereby gain everlasting glory, and felicity to himself in the next life: it follows by order of good consequence, that we should treat in this place, how a man may attain the fruit of this doctrine: that is to say, how he may come to be a true servant of God; and what duties are necessarily to be perform'd for the same: as also how he may examine or make trial of himself, whether he be so indeed or not. Which examination, to speak in brief, consists principally in the consideration of these two general points or heads, whereunto all other particulars may be reduced, to wit, faith and works; that is to say: first, whether he believes unfeignedly the total sum of documents and mysteries, left by Jesus and his Disciples in the Catholick Church: and secondly, whether he performs in sincerity the rules and precepts of life, prescribed unto Christians by that doctrine, for direction of their works and actions. So that on these two main points of Christian duty, we are to bestow our whole speech in this chapter.

The effect
of this
Chapter.

Two
points.

And for the first, how to examine the truth of our belief: it would be over tedious to lay down every particular way, that might be assign'd for discussion thereof: for it would bring in the contention of all times, as well ancient, as present, about controversies in Christian faith, which has been impugn'd from age to age, by the seditious instruments of Christ's infernal enemies. And therefore, as well because of the prolixity, whereof this place is not capable, as also because I avoid of purpose, all dealing with matters of controversy, within the compass of this work; I mean only at this time, for the comfort of such as are already in the right way, and for some light to others, who perhaps

The first
part con-
cerning be-
lief.

out

out of simplicity may walk awry; to set down with as great brevity as possible, some few general notes or observations for their better help in this behalf.

The mat-
ters of
faith and
belief easy
among
Christians.

In which great affair of our faith and belief (wherein consists as well the ground and foundation of our eternal welfare, as also the fruit and entire utility of Christ's coming into this world) it is to be consider'd, that God could not of his infinite wisdom (foreseeing all things, and times to come) nor ever would of his unspeakable goodness (desiring our salvation as he does) leave us in this life, without most sure, certain, and clear evidence in this matter: and consequently we must imagine that all errors committed herein (I mean in matters of faith and belief among Christians) do proceed rather from sin, negligence, wilfulness, or inconsideration in our selves: than either from difficulties, or doubtfulness in the means left unto us, for discerning the same; or from the want of God's holy assistance to that effect, if we would with humility accept thereof.

This, *Isaiab* made plain, when he prophesied of this perspicuity; that is, of this most excellent privilege in Christian religion, so many hundred years before Christ was born. For after, he had declared in divers chapters, and foretold the glorious coming of Christ in signs and miracles; as also the multitude of *Gentiles* that should imbrace his doctrine, together with the joy and exultation of their conversion: he foreshews presently the wonderful providence of God in providing also for Christians, so manifest a way, of direction for their faith and religion, that the most simple and unlearned man in the world, should not be able, but out of wilfulness, to go astray therein. His words are these directed to the *Gentiles*. *Take comfort and fear*

Isaiab 35. not --- behold your God shall come and save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened; and the ears of the deaf shall be restored. --- And there shall be a path and way: and it shall be called * the holy way: --- and it shall be unto you so direct a way, as fools shall not err therein.

* The di-
rect holy
way of the
Catholick
Church,

By

By which words we see, that among other rare benefits that Christ's people were to receive by his coming; this should be one, and not the least: that after his holy doctrine was once publish'd and received, it should not be easy even for the weakest in capacity or learning (whom *Isaiab* here notes by the name of fools) to run awry in matters of their belief; so plain, clear, and evident should the way, for trial thereof, be made.

Hence it is, that *St. Paul* pronounces so peremptorily of a contentious and heretical man: *That he is condemn'd by the testimony of his own judgment or conscience:* for that he has abandon'd this common, direct, and publick way, which all men might see; and has devised particular paths and turnings to himself. Hence it is, that the ancient fathers of Christ's primitive church, disputing against the same kind of people, maintain'd always, that their error was out of malice, and wilful blindness, and not out of ignorance; applying those words of prophecy unto them: *They that saw me, fled from me. That is,* (says *St. Augustine*) *they who saw and beheld the Catholick church of Christ* (which is the plain way denoted by *Isaiab*; and the most eminent mountain described by *Daniel*; as also by *Isaiab* himself in another place; and expounded by Christ in *St. Matthew's Gospel*) *this Church*, says he, *wicked hereticks beholding* (for no man can avoid the sight thereof, but he that most obstinately will shut his eyes) *yet for hatred and malice, they run out of the same; and do raise up heresies and schisms against the unity hereof.*

Thus much says this holy doctor: by whose discourse we may perceive, that the plain and direct way mention'd by *Isaiab*, where no simple or ignorant man can err; is the general body of Christ's visible church upon earth, planted by his Apostles throughout all countries, and nations; and continuing by succession, unto the world's end. In which church, whosoever remains, and believes all things that are taught therein; cannot possibly fall into error of faith. For this church or uni-

Titus 3.

See *St. Aug.*
tract. 1. in
Epist. Joan
& l. de un.
Eccl. cont.
Pet. c. 14.

Psal. 30.

Concion.
2. in *Psal.*
30.*Daniel 2.*
Isaiab 2.
*Mat. 5.*The way
of avoiding
error in be-
lief.

versal body is guided by Christ's spirit, who is the head thereof; and so no ways subject or within the compass of error. For which cause, St. *Paul* names it: *The pillar and firmament of truth*. And the same church is so manifest and evident (and shall be so to the world's end, as the same learned Doctor, and others his equals do prove) that it is more easy to find it out, than it is to see the Sun or Moon, when it shines brightest; or to behold the greatest hill or mountain in the world. For as St. *Augustine's* words are: *Tho' particular bills in one country, may be unknown in another; as Olympus in Greece, may be unknown in Africa; and the mountain Giddaba of Africk, may be unknown in Greece: yet, says this holy father, a mountain that passes throughout all countries, and fills up the whole world, as Daniel* prophesied Christ's church should do, *cannot but be apparent to the sight of all men; and consequently must needs be known by all men, but only such as willingly do shut their eyes not to see it.*

For declaration of which reason, argument, and discourse of holy fathers (being also the discourse of Christ himself in the Gospel, when he remits men to the visible church, that is placed on a hill) it is to be noted, that in the time from Christ's ascension, until the thirteenth year of *Nero's* reign, who first of the *Roman* emperors, began open persecution against the the proceedings of Christians, and put to death St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*: in this time, I say of toleration under the *Roman* empire, which continued the space of thirty six years, Christ's Apostles and Disciples had preach'd and planted one uniform Gospel, throughout all the world; as both by their Acts recorded; as also by the peculiar testimony of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, may appear. Which thing being done most miraculously, by the power and virtue of their master; and also by bishops, pastors, and other governors, ordain'd in every church, and country, for guiding and directing the same, by themselves, and their successors to the world's end:

this,

1 Tim 3.
Aug. tract.
1. in epist.
Joan.
Chri.
Hom. 4. de
verb. Isa.
vidi Dom.

Dan. 2.

A declaration of the
Fathers argument.
Mat. 5. 13.
20.

Rom. 1.

this, I say, being once brought to pass, and the little stone, that was cut out of a hill without hands, being now made a huge mountain, that had spread it self over the whole face of the earth, according to *Daniel's* prophecy: then those holy and sage Apostles, for preventing all new doctrine and false errors, that might afterwards arise (as by revelation from Jesus, they understood there would do many) most earnestly exhorted, and with all possible vehemency call'd upon the people, to stand fast in the documents and traditions then received; to hold firmly the faith and doctrine already deliver'd, as a *Depositum* and treasure committed to be safely kept until the last day. And above all other things, they most diligently forewarn'd them, to beware of new fangled teachers, whom they call'd *Hereticks*; who should break from the unity of this universal body, already made and knit together; and should devise new glosses, expositions, and interpretations of Scripture; bring in, new senses, doctrine, opinions, and divisions, to the renting of God's church and city now built, and to the perdition of infinite souls.

Dan. 2.

1 Cor. 16.

Gal. 5.

2 Thes. 2.

1 Tim. 6. 20

2 Tim. 1.

Mat. 7.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Tit. 3.

2 Thes. 3.

2 Joan. 7.

Apoc. 2.

For discerning of which kind of most pernicious people (as St. *Augustine* and other holy fathers note) and for more perfect distinction between them and true Christians; the said Apostles made use of the name *Catholick*; and set down in their common creed, that clause or article: *I believe the holy Catholick church*. By which word *Catholick*, that signifies universal, they gave to understand to all posterity; that whatsoever doctrine, or opinion should be raised afterwards among Christians, disagreeing from the general consent, doctrine, and tradition of the universal church; was to be reputed as error and heresy, and utterly to be rejected. And that the only anchor, stay, and security of a Christian's mind, in matters of belief for his salvation, was to be a *Catholick*; that is, * as all ancient fathers do interpret, one, who laying aside all particular opinions and imaginations, both of himself and others,

Aug. 1. de vera rel.

The first use of the name *Catholicks*.

* See *Hierom. cont. Luciferian*

Vinc. Lyri.
I cont. hæ-
ref.
Aug. cont.
2p. Man.

does subject his judgment to the determination of Christ's universal, visible, and known church upon earth; embracing whatsoever that believes; and abandoning whatsoever that church rejects. And this is the plain, direct, sure, and infallible way among Christians, whereof we spoke out of *Isaiab*, and other Prophets and Saints of God, before, wherein no man can err, tho' never so simple; but only out of wilful and obstinate malice: which is declared in the following manner.

Why he
 that heark-
 ens to the
 Church
 cannot be
 deceived.

The Gospel of Christ, being once preach'd, and received uniformly over all the world, and churches of Christianity erected throughout all countries, provinces, and nations in the Apostles time, as has been said: it is to be consider'd, that this universal church, body, or kingdom, so gather'd, founded, and establish'd, was to continue visibly; not for one or two ages, but unto the world's end. For so it was foreshew'd and promised most perspicuously by *Daniel*, when he, foretelling the four great monarchies, that after him should ensue, adjoins these evident words of the church and kingdom of Christ: *In the days of those kingdoms, the God of Heaven will raise up a kingdom that shall not be dissipated for ever; and that kingdom shall not be delivered to another people.* By which last words, as also by divers promises of Christ himself in the Gospel, we are ascertain'd, that the very same visible congregation, church, body, commonwealth, government and kingdom, which was establish'd by the Apostles in their time, shall endure, and continue by succession of followers, unto the world's end: neither shall it pass over, or be deliver'd to any other people: that is, no new teachers of later doctrine dissenting from the first, shall ever finally prevail against it. Which prophecy, to have been fulfill'd from that day unto this, is made evident and most apparent, by the records of all ages; wherein tho' divers errors and heresies have sprung up, and made great blustering and disturbance for a time; yet they have been repress'd and beaten down again by the same church, and her visible pillars, pastors, and doctors.

Dan. 2.

For

For example ; in the first age their arose up certain No heresy
 seditious fellows among the *Jews*, making some con- ever pre-
 tention about their ceremonies ; as also did *Simon Ma-* valid a-
gus, Nicolaus, Cerinthus, Ebion, and Menander, that gainst the
 were hereticks. Against whom, besides the Apostles, Church.
 their Disciples *St. Martialis, St. Dionysius Areopagita,*
Ignatius, Polycarpus, and others, stood in defence of
 that, which was published before. In the second age,
 rose up *Basilides, Cerdon, Marcion, Valentinus, Tacia-*
nus, Apelles, Montanus and divers others : against whom
 stood *Justin Martyr, Dionysius Bishop of Corinth, Ire-*
næus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, and their
 equals. And so downward, from age to age, unto
 our days, whatsoever heresy, or different opinion has
 been raised, contrary to the general consent of this
 universal body ; it has been check'd and controll'd by
 the watchmen, pastors, and chief governors of this
 body. And finally has been condemn'd and anathe-
 matiz'd by their general assemblies, and councils, ga-
 ther'd from time to time, as occasions served, in all
 parts of the world. Whereby it is most manifest, that
 he, who relies upon this general consent of Christ's
 church on earth, and adheres to nothing against the
 judgment of the same, cannot possibly err in matters of
 belief ; but walks in that secure, and infallible path,
 wherein *Isaiah* says : that a fool cannot go amiss.

A secure
 way.

Isaiah 35.

Wherefore, to conclude this first part of our present
 speech, concerning the trial of our faith and belief : he
 that is a true Catholick, and holds himself within the
 obedience of this general and universal church, which
 has descended by succession from Christ and his Apo-
 stles : that is (as *Vincentius* said, eleven hundred years
 ago, in his most excellent treatise against innovations
 of hereticks) he that loves the church and body of
 Jesus Christ so much, as to prefer nothing in the world
 before the Catholick and universal doctrine thereof :
 not any private man's authority, love, wit, or elo-
 quence, not reasons of nature, or pretence of scriptures,

The con-
 clusion of
 the first
 part.

Vincent.
Lirin. l.
cont. heres.
c. 3.

*Aug. Epist.
cont. Ma-
nichæ. c. 4.
& l. de vera
relig. c. 7.*

against that, which before him was believed by all men : he that follows universality, antiquity, and consent in his belief ; and stands firmly to that faith, which has been held in all places, in all seasons, and by all, or the most part of bishops, priests, and doctors, of Christianity : he that can say with St. *Augustine*, that he truly follows the universal Church, which had her beginning by the entering in of nations, got authority by miracles, was encreased by charity, and establish'd by continuance, which has her succession of bishops from the chair of *Peter* until our time : that Church, which is known in the world by the name of *Catholick*, not only to her friends, but also among her enemies, (for even hereticks in common speech do term her so, having no other means to distinguish themselves and their followers from her, but by calling themselves *Reformers*, *Illuminates*, *Unspotted brethren*, and such other names that are different from *Catholick*.) He that protests with St. *Jerom*, that he does abhor all sects and names of particular men ; as *Marcionists*, *Montanists*, *Valentinians*, and the like : that does confess sincerely with blessed *Cyprian*, that one priest for the time is to be obey'd by all Christians, as judge, representing Christ, according to the ordinance of God : he that is modest, quiet, sober, void of contention, and obedient as St. *Paul* describes a true and good *Catholick* : that is humble in his own conceit, and agreeing to humble things, firm in faith. and not variable, nor delighted in new doctrines : he that can captivate his understanding to the obedience of Christ : which is, to believe humbly such things as Christ by his Church proposes unto him, tho' his reason or sense should not comprehend the same : and finally, he that can be content at Christ's command, to bear the Church in all things, without doubt or exception, and obey the governors thereof, tho' they should be scribes and pharisees ; and consequently, can say truly and sincerely, with the whole * college of Christ's Apostle, *Credo sanctam Ecclesiam*

*Hieron.
Dial. cont.
Luciferian
Cyprian.
epist. 55. ad
Cornel.*

*Gal. 5.
Phil. 1.
Titus 3.
Rom. 13.
Ephes. 4.
Heb. 13.
2 Cor. 10.
Mat. 18.
Mat. 23.*

* *Ambros.
ep. 7. ad
Syrizium.*

Eclesiam Catholicam, I do believe the holy Catholick and universal Church, and whatsoever that Church does set forth, teach, hold, or believe: that man, no doubt, is in a most sure way for matters of his faith, and cannot possibly walk awry therein: but may think himself a good Christian for this first point, which is, as to matters of belief.

Hieron. ad Pamech. ep. 6. in fine Aug. jerm. 131. de temp.

S E C T. II.

Concerning good WORKS.

THERE follows the second part of Christian profession, concerning life and manners; which is a matter of so much more difficulty, than the former, by how many more ways a man be deceived and led from a virtuous life, than from sincere faith. Wherein there can be no comparison at all; seeing the path of our belief is so manifest, as has been shew'd, that no man can err therein, but out of inexcusable wilfulness. Which wilfulness in error, the holy * fathers of Christ's primitive Church, did always refer to two principal and original causes; that is, to pride, or over weening in our own conceits; and to malice against our superiors, for not giving us content in things that we desire. From the first, do proceed the devising of new opinions, new glossing, expounding, and applying of scriptures; the calling of holy writ itself in question; the contempt of ancient customs and traditions; the preferring our judgment before all others, either present or past; the debasing of holy fathers, priests, prelates, councils, ordinances, constitutions, and all other things and proofs whatsoever, that stand not with our own liking and approbation. From the second fountain are derived other qualities conformable to that humour; as are, the denying of jurisdiction and authority in our superiors; the contempt of prelates; the exaggeration of the faults and

*See S. Au. lib. de util. cred. c. 1. & tract. 1. in ep. Joan. Cyp. ep. 61.

Two causes of heresies. I.

The do-
ings of he-
reticks.

defects of our governors ; the impugning of all episcopal dignity, or ecclesiastical eminency, and especially of the See apostolick, whereunto appertains the correction of such like offenders. For the satisfying this devilish and most pernicious vein of malice, those wicked reprobates do incite and arm the people against their spiritual pastors ; they kindle factions against God's anointed substitutes ; they devise a new Church, a new form of government, a new kingdom, and ecclesiastical hierarchy upon earth ; whereby to bring men in doubt and staggering, what, or whom to believe ; or whereunto to have recourse in such difficulties as do arise.

The ob-
servation
of St. Cy-
prian. ep.
65. ad Ro-
gatian.

These two maladies, I say, of pride, and malice, have been the two causes of obstinate error in all hereticks from the beginning, as well noted that holy and ancient bishop and martyr St. *Cyprian*, when he said so long ago ; “ These are the beginnings and original causes of hereticks, and wicked schismaticks, “ first, to please and esteem themselves ; and then “ being puff'd up with the swelling of pride ; to “ coteemn their governors and superiors. Thus do “ they abandon and forsake the Church ; thus do “ they erect a prophane altar out of the Church, “ against the Church ; thus do they break the peace “ and unity of Christ, and rebel against God's holy “ ordination”.

Many
causes of
evil life,

Now then, as these are the causes, either only, or principally of erring in our belief, most facile and easy, as we see, to be discern'd ; so there are many more occasions, causes, off-springs, and fountains to be found, of going astray in life and manners. That is to say, as many in number, as we have evil passions, inordinate appetites, wicked desires, or unlawful inclinations within our minds ; every one whereof is the cause oftentimes of a disorderly life, and breach of God's commandments. For which respect, there is much more set down in scripture, for exhortation to
good

good life; than for direction of faith: for that the defect herein is more ordinary and easy, and more provok'd by our own frailty; as also by the multitude of infinite temptations. Wherefore we read that our Saviour Jesus in the very beginning of his preaching, straight after he was baptized, and had chosen unto him St. Peter, and St. Andrew, James, and John, and some other few Disciples, went up to the mountain, and there made his first most excellent sermon, recited by St. Matthew in three whole chapters; wherein he talks of nothing else, but of virtuous life, poverty, meekness, justice, purity, sorrow for sin, patience in suffering, contempt of riches, forgiving of injuries, fasting, prayer, penance, entering by the strait gate; and finally, of perfection, holiness, and integrity of conversation, and of the exact fulfilling of God's law and commandments.

The effect
of Christ's
first ser-
mon.

Mat. 5, 6, 7

He assured his Disciples with great asseveration, that he came not to break the law, but to fulfil the same: and consequently, that whosoever should break the least of his commandments, and should so teach men to do; that is, should persevere therein, without repentance, and so by his example draw other men to do the like, should have no place in the kingdom of heaven. Again, he exhorted them most earnestly to be lights, and to shine by good works to all the world; and that except their justice did exceed the justice of scribes and pharisees, which was but ordinary, and external, they could not be saved. He told them plainly, they could not serve two masters in this life; but either must forsake God, or abandon Mammon. He cried unto them, *Attendite, stand attentive*, and consider well your state and condition: and then again, *Seek to enter by the strait gate*. And lastly, he concludes: the only trial of a good tree, is the good fruit, which it yields: without which fruit, let the tree be never so fair or pleasant to the eye, yet it is to be cut down and burnt; and that not every one who shall

Mat. 5, v.

20.

Ibid.

Ibid. v. 22

Chap. 6.

Chap. 7.

say

say or cry unto him, *Lord, Lord*, at the last day, should be saved, or enter into the kingdom of heaven; but only such as did execute the will and commandments of his Father in this life. For want whereof, he assures them, that many at that day, who had not only believed, but also wrought miracles in his name, should be denied, rejected, and abandoned by him.

Faith is not
sufficient
without
works.

Which long lesson of virtuous life, being the first that ever our Saviour gave in publick to his Disciples, then newly gather'd together, as *St. Matthew* notes, (having treated very little of points of faith before; but only in general, having shewed himself to be the true Messias, by some miracles and preaching) does sufficiently teach us, that it is not enough to believe in Jesus, and make profession of his name and doctrine, except we conform our lives and actions to the prescript of the commandments. For altho' in Christian religion, faith is the first and principal foundation, whereupon all the rest is to be grounded; yet, as in other material buildings, after the foundation is laid, there remains the greatest labour, time, cost, art, and diligence, to be bestow'd upon the framing, and furnishing of other parts, that must ensue: even so in this celestial edifice or building of our soul, having laid once the foundation and ground of true belief; the rest of all our life-time, labour, and studies is to be employ'd in the perfecting of our life and actions: and as it were, in raising up the walls and other parts of our spiritual building, by the exercise of all virtues, and diligent observance of God's commandments. Without which, our faith is to no more purpose nor profit, than is a foundation without a building upon it; or a stock or tree, that bears no fruit. Which thing *St. James* expresses most excellently in this fit similitude: *Even as the body without the spirit is dead; so also faith without works is dead.*

A similitude touching faith and works.

Concerning which necessary point of a virtuous life, and observing God's commandments, *St. Augustine*,
and

and other ancient fathers were of opinion, that not only the last words of *St. James*, and the whole discourse which he makes of this matter in that chapter; but also both his, and all other Apostles writings, set forth and publish'd after *St. Paul's* Epistles, were principally to repress the most absurd and pernicious error of some carnal and sensual Christians, in the primitive church, who whilst the Apostles themselves were yet alive, to indulge more freely their own appetites, pretended upon some obscure and hard places in *St. Paul*, that faith alone was sufficient to save them. For proof whereof, I will alledge only these words of *St. Augustine*, written in a book for this purpose, intitled: *Of Faith, and good Works*. Thus then he begins:

“ For that this wicked opinion of faith alone being
 “ sufficient for salvation, was sprung up in the Apostles
 “ time by ill understanding of *St. Paul*; all the other
 “ apostolical Epistles which ensue, of *St. Peter*, *St. John*,
 “ *St. James*, and *St. Jude*, were directed principally to
 “ this end, to prove with all vehemency; *That faith*
 “ *without good works is nothing worth*. And indeed *St. Paul*
 “ himself did not define every manner of faith, whereby
 “ we believe in God to be a saving faith; but only
 “ means that profitable and evangelical faith, which has
 “ works annex'd, proceeding from charity. And as for
 “ that faith which is without works, and yet seems to
 “ these men to be sufficient for their salvation; he pro-
 “ tests, that it is so unprofitable, that he doubts not to
 “ say of himself: if I should have all faith, in such sort,
 “ as I were able to move mountains, and yet had not
 “ charity; I were nothing. By which charity, no
 “ doubt, good life is meant, for in another place it is
 “ said, *Charity is the fulfilling of the law*. Wherefore
 “ *St. Peter* most evidently in his second Epistle; having
 “ exhorted men to holiness of life and manners; shews,
 “ that certain wicked persons took occasion by some
 “ obscure sentences of *St. Paul*, to promise themselves
 “ security of salvation by faith alone. Which hard
 “ sentences,

St. Austin's
discourse.
Aug. lib.
de fide &
oper. c. 14.

Gal. 5.

1 Cor. 13.

Rom. 13.

- 2 *Pet.* 3. “ sentences, *St. Peter* affirms, that these miserable men
 “ perverted to their own destruction, as they did also
 “ other holy Scriptures; seeing that *St. Paul* was of
 “ the very same opinion, as the other Apostles were,
 “ concerning life everlasting to be obtain’d by none,
 “ but such only, as join’d virtuous life with their be-
 “ lief. But *St. James* of all others, is most vehement
 “ against such, as think, faith can suffice to salvation
James 2. “ without good works; insomuch, that he compares
 “ them to the devils themselves, saying: *Thou dost be-
 “ lieve that there is one God: thou dost well: the devils
 “ also do believe the same, and tremble.* What could
 “ be spoken more truly, briefly, and vehemently than
 “ this? seeing in the Gospel we read, that the devils
 “ made the same confession of Christ’s Deity, as did
Mark 1. “ *St. Peter*; and yet Christ commended the one, and
Mat. 16. “ reprehended the other, &c. Wherefore, let not
Ibid. c. 22. “ simple minds be deceived, and think they know
 “ God, if they confess him with dead faith; that is,
 “ with a faith void of good works, as the devils do,
 “ for that they read, perhaps, in scripture these words
 “ of Christ; *This is life everlasting, that men know thee
 “ the true God; and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*
 “ Let them not, I say, be deceived with this; but let
Joan. 15. “ them remember how Christ’s Apostle expounds that
 1 *Joan.* 2. “ saying, when he writes: *In this we know, that we
 “ have known him, if we observe his commandments;
 “ he that saith, that he knoweth him, and keepeth not his
 “ commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”*

Thus far have I thought good to alledge *St. Augu-
 stine’s* words and discourse, furnish’d, as you see, with
 great variety of Scriptures, out of his most excellent
 Book *De Fide & Operibus*, of which book he writes
 thus in another place of his works: “ I have writ a
 “ book of this question, whose title is *Of Faith and
 “ Works*, in which, according to the holy Scriptures,
 “ as much as by God’s help I could, I have demon-
 “ strated; that men must be saved by that faith, which

“ is

*Aug. Eu-
 chirid.* c.
 67.

St. Aug. his
 excellent
 book, *De
 Fide &
 Operibus.*

“ is join’d with good works : which *St. Paul* did evidently enough declare, when he said ; *For in Christ Gal. 5.*
 “ *Jesus, neither circumcision availeth ought, nor prepuce :*
 “ *but Faith, that worketh by charity.* But if this faith
 “ do work evil, and not well, then, without all doubt,
 “ it is a dead faith in it self, according to the Apostle
 “ *St. James*, who adds yet further : *If a man say he James 2.*
 “ *hath faith, but hath not works, can his faith be able*
 “ *to save him ?* moreover, if a wicked man for his
 “ only faith may be saved, as some erroneously have
 “ believed ; by help of that purging fire, whereof
 “ *St. Paul* speaks to the *Corinthians*, then would it *1 Cor. 3.*
 “ follow, that faith without works may save a man ;
 “ and then what *St. James* coequal Apostle with
 “ *St. Paul*, has left written would be false, that faith
 “ without works cannot save us. Nay, it must be false
 “ also what *St. Paul* himself affirm’d to the *Corinthians*,
 “ saying ; *Be not deceived, for neither fornicators, nor 1 Cor. 6.*
 “ *idolaters, nor adulterers ---- nor thieves ---- nor drunk-*
 “ *ards, &c. Shall possess the kingdom of God :* which
 “ would not be true, if Christians, persevering in these
 “ sins, should be saved notwithstanding, for only be-
 “ lieving the faith of Christ. For if they be saved,
 “ how shall they not be in the kingdom of God ?” thus
 far *St. Augustine.*

St. Gregory the Great, makes out of holy writ the very same discourse upon this point. For, having considered those most comfortable words of Christ to *St. Thomas* : *Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed ;* he speaks as follows. “ Perhaps here, *The proof used by St. Gregory.*
 “ every Christian will say within himself, I do believe, *Joan. 20.*
 “ and therefore I am blessed, and shall be saved. *Greg. hom. 29. in Evan.*
 “ Wherein he says truth, if his life be answerable to his
 “ belief. For true faith does not contradict in man-
 “ ners, what it professes in words. For which cause, it
 “ was said of certain false Christians by *St. Paul* :
 “ *They confess God in words ; but deny him in deeds : Tit. 1.*
 “ and by *St. John* : *Whosoever says he knows God, 1 Joan. 2.*
 “ and

What we
promised
in Baptism.

“ *and keeps not his commandments, is a liar.* Which
“ being so ; we must examine the truth of our faith,
“ by consideration of our life : for then, and not other-
“ wise, are we true Christians, if we fulfil in works,
“ what we have promised in words : that is ; in the
“ day of our baptism, we promised to renounce the
“ pomp of this world, together with all the works of
“ iniquity : which promise, if we perform now after
“ baptism ; then are we true Christians, and may be
“ joyful.” And in another place, the same holy father

Lib. 33.
moral. c. 7.

adds this. “ For as divers men are Christians in pro-

Mat. 7.

“ fession and faith only, and not in life ; hence it is
“ said, by the voice of truth it self : *Not every one*
“ *that shall say to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into*
“ *the kingdom of heaven.* And again : *Why do you*
“ *call me Lord, Lord, and do not perform the things*

Isa. 29. 13.

“ *that I tell you ?* Hence it is, that God complain’d of
“ his people the *Jews*, saying ; *This people honoureth*
“ *me with their lips ; but their heart is far from me.*

Psalms 77.

“ And the Prophet *David* of the same people ; *They*
“ *loved him with their mouth ; and with their tongues*
“ *they lyed unto him, &c.* Wherefore let no man
“ trust, that his faith may save him without good
“ deeds ; seeing that we know it is written expressly ;
“ *Faith without works is dead* : and consequently cannot
“ be profitable, or save us from damnation.” Hitherto
St. Gregory.

Which very conclusion St. *Chrysostom* makes with
great vehemency, upon consideration of that woful
chance and heavy judgment, that happen’d unto him,
who in the Gospel was admitted to the feast of Christian
faith and knowledge ; but for want of the ornament or
garment of good life, was contumeliously deprived of
his expectation ; of whom St. *Chrysostom*’s words are
these : “ He was invited to the feast and brought to
“ the table, but because by his foul garment, he dis-
“ honour’d our Lord, that had invited him ; hear how
“ miserable and lamentable a punishment he suffer’d :

The testi-
mony and
exhorta-
tion of St.
Chrysostom.
Chrysostom.
9. in *Joan*.

“ He

“ He was not only thrust from the table and banquet;
 “ but also bound hand and foot, and cast into utter dark-
 “ ness, where there is eternal weeping and gnashing
 “ of teeth. Wherefore let us not, I beseech you dear bre-
 “ thren, let us not, I say, deceive ourselves, and ima-
 “ gine, that our faith will save us without good works.
 “ For except we join pure life to our belief, and in
 “ this heavenly vocation of ours, do apparel ourselves
 “ with worthy garments of virtuous deeds, whereby
 “ we may be admitted at the marriage-day in hea-
 “ ven; nothing will be able to deliver us from the dam-
 “ nation of this miserable man, that wanted his wed-
 “ ding weed”. Which thing St. *Paul* well notes, when
 having said: *We have an everlasting house in heaven,* 2 Cor. 5.
not made by hands: he adds presently this exception;
Si tamen vestiti, & non nudi inveniamur; that is, if
 we be found at that day apparell’d, and not naked.
 Would to God every Christian desirous of his salva-
 tion, would ponder well this discourse and exhortation
 of St. *Chrysostom*.

And so, to conclude our speech in this chapter, The con-
 without allegation of further authorities, which are clusion of
 infinite to this effect, it may appear by what has al- this chap-
 ready been set down, wherein the true profession of ter.
 a Christian consists; and thereby each man that is not
 partial, or blinded in his own affection, as many are,
 may take a view of his state and condition, and frame
 unto himself a very probable conjecture, how he is
 like to speed at the last accounting day; that is, what
 profit or damage he may expect, by his knowledge and
 profession of Christian religion. For, as to him that walks
 uprightly in that vocation, and performs effectually
 every way his profess’d duty, there remain both infinite
 and inestimable rewards prepared: so to him that strays
 aside, and swerves from the right path of life or faith
 prescribed unto him, there are no less pains and punish-
 ments reserved. For which cause every Christian, that
 is careful of his salvation, ought to fix his eye very se-
 riously

riously upon them both: and as he shews himself constant, firm, humble, obedient, and in one word, *Catholick* in belief: so he must shew himself honest, just, pure, innocent and holy in conversation.

This second point concerning life and manners, being more difficult, as has been shew'd, than the other of belief (whereof notwithstanding we have also treated sufficiently in the former chapters) the rest of this whole work shall tend to the declaration of this latter part, I mean of good life; thereby to stir up and awake (if so it may please the merciful goodness of our blessed Saviour) the slothful hearts of Christians, to the consideration of their own state, and make them more vigilant in this great affair, whereon depends their endless wo, or welfare.

C H A P. VI.

Two principal Exercises, that appertain to a Christian life; which are: To resist all sin; and to exercise all kind of virtue and good works: with the means how to perform them both.

SECT. I. *The reason of this chapter.*

Supposing that in the parts of this book which ensue, we are to deal only with such, as are instructed, and settled in true Christian faith (whereunto we have proved before, that a virtuous life, and good deeds are necessarily to be joined.) It seems convenient in this place, to treat of the points or principal parts belonging thereunto. Which parts are briefly prescribed by God himself, in the writings of *David*, *Isaiab*, and other Prophets of the old Testament, to be two, to wit: *To decline from vice; and embrace virtue.* But much more plainly are they set down and explain'd by *St. Peter*,

Psalm 26.
Isaiab 1.

St. Peter, St. Paul, and other Saints of the evangelical law: the former affirming, that the fruit and effect of Christ's death and passion is; *That dead to sin, we may live to justice*: and the other adjoining: *The grace of God our Saviour appear'd to all men, instructing us; that renouncing wickedness, --- we live justly, and godly in this world, &c.*

*1 Peter 2.
Titus 2.*

By which testimonies of holy writ, and by many others, which to this purpose might be alledged, is made clear and evident, that the whole duty of a Christian's life in this world, is reduced to these two heads or principles, to wit: to the resistance of all evil, and to the exercise of all piety and virtue. In respect of the first, our life is call'd in holy scripture, a warfare upon earth, and virtuous men are term'd soldiers. For, as good soldiers do lie in continual wait to resist their enemies: so vigilant Christians do carefully stand upon their watch, for resisting the suggestions and temptations of sin. In regard of the second point, we are named labourers, husbandmen, sowers, merchants, bankers, stewards, farmers and the like; and our whole life is term'd a mart, traffick, or negociation. For, as these kind of people do attend with diligence to their gain and increase of their temporal riches in this life: so ought we to apply ourselves wholly, in the continual exercise of good works, to the honour and praise of God, whose people we are; and to the augmentation of our merit and treasure in the world to come.

*Job. 7.
2 Cor. 10.*

*Mat. 9.10.
20.
1 Tim. 5.*

These then are the two parts of a good Christians life; the two principal points whereupon we should meditate; the exercise wherein we should be occupied; the two legs whereupon we should walk towards our country; the two arms wherewith we should lay fast hold of God's eternal kingdom; the two wings whereby we must fly and mount up to heaven. So, whosoever does want any one of these two parts, tho' he had the other; yet can he never ascend to God's bliss: no more than a bird can fly, being maimed of one of

One of these parts not available without the other.

her wings. My meaning is ; that neither integrity of life is sufficient without good works ; nor good works available, without a pure and undefiled life. The latter is made clear by God's own speeches to the people of *Israel* ; whose sacrifices, oblations, prayers, and other such works, that were commended, and commanded by himself, he oftentimes rejected, and accounted abominable, for that the offerers and exhibitors thereof, were men of impious and sinful conversation. The former also is apparently shew'd by Christ's parable of the foolish virgins ; who tho' they were virgins, and in-contaminate from sin : yet because they had not the oyl of good works, to give light in their lamps, they were excluded from the marriage banquet : as also that other most unfortunate fellow was, who wanted his wedding ornaments. Both these points then are necessary to a Christian's salvation ; and so necessary, that the one without the other is not available. And by this may appear the most excellent perfection of a Christian life, if it were perform'd as it should be, and many no doubt, do perform it ; which is to admit no sin either in mind or work ; and to pretermitt no virtue, that may be exercised. O angelical ! yea more than angelical excellency : for that Angels have neither temptations to resist ; nor meritorious works to exercise themselves in : we will treat briefly of both parts.

Isaiah 1.
Jer. 6.
Amos 5.

Mat. 25.

Mat. 22.

S E C T. II.

R E S I S T A N C E of S I N.

AND as for the first point, which is resisting of sin, we are commanded by God's holy word to do it manfully, vigilantly, constantly, and sincerely. *St. Paul* does add, that in this resistance we ought to strive even to death, and to the shedding of our blood, if need require. *Nondum usque ad sanguinem restitistis adversus peccatum repugnantes*, you have not yet resisted unto

Heb. 12.

unto the effusion of your blood in fighting against sin ; as tho' he had said, this must you do, and this is your duty and obligation, and to this God will have you bound, when occasion does require. And to the *Ephe- sians* he makes a long discourse upon this matter, exhorting them to arm themselves to this fight : *Put on* (says he) *the armour of God upon you, that you may be able to stand against the snares of the devil, &c.* Take unto you the armour of God, that you may resist in the day of evil. And finally to omit many other speeches of his to this purpose ; he gives a general rule to his scholar *Timothy* : *That no man shall be crowned, which fights not competently.*

We must resist sin even to death.

Ephef. 6.

St. Paul's exhortation to fight

2 Tim. 2.

According to which doctrine, *St. James*, *St. Peter*, and *St. John*, do earnestly exhort us to resist strongly and vigilantly the devil, the flesh, and the world, as a point wherein principally consists the duty of a good Christian in this life. In conformity whereto, the holy and blessed man *Job* endued with God's spirit, does, after a large discourse of the dreadful power, and cruelty of our great enemy *Leviathan* or *Satban*, end with this watch word : *Memento belli* : be not unmindful of the war which thou hast in hand, and shalt have during life, with this mortal enemy of thine.

James 4.
1 Peter 5.
1 John 2.

Job 14.

If you ask me why our merciful Saviour *Jesus Christ*, having conquer'd this *Leviathan*, and all the force of sin in him ; would notwithstanding have us fight after he had overcome, and pass thro' a battle in imitation of him ; one reason is evident by that we have cited before out of *St. Paul* : that he will have us crown'd : and none can be crown'd, but he that has lawfully fought : And therefore he repeats so often in the book of *Revelations*, that he will give the crown of heaven, only to such as have overcome, and conquer'd in this combat. *Vincenti*, says he, *dabo manna absconditum*. To him that shall conquer will I give hidden manna. And again : *Qui vicerit, sic vestietur* : he that shall overcome shall thus be apparell'd by me with glory. And finally,

Why Christ will have us fight.

2 Tim. 2.

Apoc. 3.

to omit many other places, he concludes this third chapter of *Revelations* in these words: *To him that overcometh will I give a seat together with me in my throne, even as I having conquer'd, do sit down with my father in his throne.*

In which last words, if you mark, there is another cause discover'd of this our war, which ought to touch our very hearts, to wit, the imitation of our captain, and our being crown'd with him: that as he, by fighting, and overcoming was exalted to the throne of his father; so we may be exalted to his throne, for the like reason. Upon which cause, and most comfortable consideration, St. *Paul* grounds himself in his epistle to the *Hebrews*, when he exhorts them so earnestly to the like fight, as follows: "Shaking off from us all
 " weight or clog, that may hinder us; let us by patience run into the combat offer'd us, with our eyes
 " fix'd upon the author of our faith, and fulfiller
 " thereof, Christ Jesus, who setting before his eyes
 " the joys of heaven, and contemning the confusion
 " (or worldly shame) that thereby might ensue, sustain'd the cross, and thereby is come now to sit at
 " the right hand of the seat of God his Father."

Divers reasons of our fight.

This was the most excellent encouragement and exhortation of St. *Paul*, whereby we see two or three particular causes utter'd, why Christ our redeemer has ordain'd us to fight so earnestly against the temptations of sin in this world: one, that we may thereby follow him, and shew our selves dutiful children of such a father, and worthy soldiers of such a captain; and the other, that we may declare also thereby the force of his heavenly grace, which was not only able to conquer the devil, in his own divine person; but in his poorest servants in like manner, who by him do overcome, and conquer daily, and thereby do get unto themselves infinite crowns of glory in heaven: which gain, is the third cause of this holy and pious ordination

to

to have us fight. And this do the ancient * fathers prove at large in their writings, when they declare unto us, why notwithstanding the guilt of original sin, and concupiscence thereon depending, is taken away by Christ's passion, and by virtue thereof in the sacrament of baptism, yet the sting or temptation of the said concupiscence, or incentive of sin, call'd by divines, *fomes peccati*, does still remain; and this not to our hurt, but *ad agonem*, as the father's words are; that is to say, to minister unto us fight and combat, and thereby matter of victory and conquest, and merit here; and in the life to come, a crown of glory. O most merciful ordination of our good God! what father could ever be so careful of his children, as he is of us, to work every way our good, and our greatest good?

Hence also it proceeds, that St. *James* considering the grounds and points before specified, does (to animate us the more to this fight) use the most comfortable exhortation, whereby he begins his epistle in these words: *Brethren, take it for a matter of all joy when you fall into sundry sorts of temptations.* And to strengthen this St. *Paul* assures us, *that God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our power.* And other holy fathers do add further, for confirmation hereof; that Christ our Saviour delights so much in this battle and combat of ours against sin, that he vouchsafes to be present; and standing by us, looks on, and abetts us therein, subminist'ring to us both force and grace, wherewith to gain the victory: and this not only in external combats, such as were of his Martyrs, against their bloody persecutors; but in all inward conflicts also of the mind, against the temptations of the foresaid concupiscence, and of the flesh, world, and devil: and so does St. *Athanasius* record, that Christ was present with that great Saint, St. *Anthony*. And the like does St. *Antoninus*, *Raymundus* and others, record of St. *Catharine of Sienna*, and other Saints in their horrible conflicts and temptations of the flesh, and other like suggestions

* See St. *Aug. l. 1. de peccat. merit. cap. ult. & lib. 2. c. 28. & lib. 1. cont. Jul. c. 3. & lib. 2. cont. Jul. c. 3. & lib. 1. de civ. cap. 25*

Why the motion of concupiscence to sin remains in us after baptism.

Jam. 1. 1 Cor. 10. Christ is present at our combats and looks on.

Athan. in vita S. Ant. B. Ramund in vita S. Catar Sen. & S. Ant. Episcopus Florent. P. 3. tit. 23.

of the enemy, and how after the combat ended, for their more compleat comfort, their Saviour appear'd unto them (when they fear'd lest he having abandon'd them, they had lost all) and shew'd, that he was much pleas'd with their fight, seeing they yielded no consent, but manfully had stood out, and got the victory. And when they ask'd him, where he was in time of their so extream affliction: he answer'd, that he was by them, and look'd upon their combat, and took pleasure to see them fight so manfully by the force of his grace; being assured, that he would make them win and have the victory by the help that he gave them. And this it is to serve such a master, and such comfort may we take to enter into battle upon confidence of such a captain, under whom, no man loses or takes hurt; but he that either runs away, or refuses the battle, or confides overmuch in his own strength, and not in the strength of his said master.

How we must be have ourselves in battle.

And thus much be spoken briefly of the pious causes that moved our Saviour to leave us this war: but now somewhat must be said also of the manner how we are to behave ourselves therein, that is to say, with what diligence, with what attention, with what rigour, constancy, sincerity, severity, and resolution. For tho', this concupiscence, or *fomes peccati*, this sting of sensuality inclining us to sin, be left only *ad agonem*, that is, to strive withal, as before has been said: yet is it a fastidious and dangerous worm; a most pestilent, and pestiferous snake lying within our bowels; which if it be not diligently look'd into, and resisted betimes, and with all watchfulness; certain it is, that it will overcome, conquer, and consume us, or utterly infect and poison us before we are aware. Hear the complaint of one well exercised in this point: *I see (says St. Paul) another law in my members repugning to the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, which is in my members. Unhappy man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? the grace of God by Jesus Christ, our Lord.* Here

Rom. 7.
The complaint of St. Paul against the stirring of concupiscence.

Here you see that *St. Paul* after his baptism, yea, and after his confirmation in grace also, as may appear out of this very epistle to the *Romans*, cries out for that he felt this sting of concupiscence in his body so strong and forcible against the law of his mind, as if it would violently compel him to commit sin indeed; and that only the grace of God by Christ, through the merits of his passion, was able to deliver him from the tyrant, and from these strong assaults. Unto which grace of our Saviour, this holy Apostle's own diligence and co-operation, was not wanting; for so he both testifies of himself, and exhorts other men to the same. Of himself, he testifies every where of his fights and combats, and tells the manner thereof: as for example to the *Corinthians*; *Ego sic pugno, non quasi aërem verberans* &c. *1 Cor. 9.* I do fight (in the combat of sin) not as beating the air; that is to say, not in vain, or idly, without purpose, making vain shews and flourishes only, as some do. But how then, holy Apostle? hearken I pray you what immediately follows in the same place: *But I chastise my body, and bring it into servitude, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, my self become a reprobate.* O dreadful speech! for those, that either do fly wholly this combat, or are negligent, or over delicate in the fight, seeing that this chosen vessel of God, after his being taken up into the third heaven, and made partaker of God's secrets; did think it so necessary for his salvation to fight this battle, with such affliction and mortification of his body; that he brought it not only into obedience and subjection to his spirit, but into servitude also (for that is the word which the Apostle uses) signifying thereby a most perfect subjection of his flesh to his spirit, such as bond-men or slaves do use towards their lords, not daring to look aside, nor to lift up so much as a finger against them, without certain assurance of severe punishment for the same; and so did *St. Paul* subdue his body unto his spirit.

St. Paul's
fight a-
gainst the
flesh.

Servitude
of the body
unto the
spirit.

He teaches others also the same manner of fight, when
Col. 3. he says to the *Colossians*; *mortify therefore your members that are upon the earth*, and then tells them wherein they must be mortified, to wit, in resisting the temptations of
St. Paul's *fornication, uncleanness, lust, wicked concupiscence, avarice, &c.* And not only these, but their very roots and
direction *origins also: as, anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy,*
for the *silly speech, lying, and the like; which buds, and evil*
manner of *fruits of concupiscence, in his epistle to the Romans, he*
our fight. *calls* *fasta carnis*, works of the flesh; for that by instigation of the flesh they commonly are committed: and then he gives this general direction; *If you live according to the flesh, you shall die* (to wit eternally) *but if by the spirit you do mortify the works of the flesh, you shall live.* This then is his meaning about the quality of this combat and fight, that it must be by chastising, and bringing our body into servitude, and by mortifying the members and carnal inclinations thereof, by the force and dominion of our spirit; and that he who follows this rule, is in the way of life, and contrarywise, he that is over indulgent to the ease and appetites of his own flesh, runs the certain path of perdition, according to the saying of our Saviour; *Qui amat animam suam perdet eam*: he that loves his soul more than he should, and yields too much to sensual delights, shall lose her: and he that hates her, that is, hates her excesses, and represses the same by mortification, shall gain and preserve her to eternal life.

Upon this ground then and doctrine, this fight against sin and the concupiscence thereof, has been always maintain'd with great care and carefulness, by the best sort of Christians since Christ's time, and that, with such precise exactness, as not only they resisted all external acts of sin: as for example, of adultery, theft, murder, deceit, rapine, injustice, and the like, but the very inward consent of heart also; for that Christ himself determin'd that point in the case of adultery, that when there is consent of in-
ward

Not only the work of sin, but consent also is to be resisted.

Mat. 5.

ward will, the sin is committed before God, tho' it never come to external act.

Moreover, the holy Apostle St. *James* notes three steps or degrees concerning the complement of sin by the consent of heart; to wit, suggestion, delectation, and consent: whereof, as the first is from the enemy, the second, from our sensuality, the third from our reason and free-will: so may the first be without our fault, the second includes, for the most part, some negligence of ours, the third convinces us always of iniquity: or to use St. *Gregory's* own words: *In suggestion is the seed of sin; in delectation, the nourishment; in consent, the perfection.* And therefore he that will avoid this consent, whereupon depends all, (for the external act of sin, is no sin, if there be no internal consent of mind) a good Christian is bound to be vigilant in all these three degrees; and first, to avoid suggestions, as much as he may, by flying occasions either of company, or others. Secondly, if suggestions come; to fly and resist delectation, by cutting off the temptation at the beginning, and crushing the serpent's head, as soon as it is discern'd whither it tends. But if we should be negligent in this; or could not avoid, or repress some sensual delectation; then at least to stand resolutely and manfully in defence of our last bulwark, wherein lies our life or death, which is the consent of heart.

Now, for performance of our duty in these three things, especially the two latter, wherein there is more danger, two diligencies are necessary: the one to be very watchful over our own actions, thoughts, and words; according to that saying of holy *Job*: *I did fear all my works.* And the Prophet *David* more exactly: *And I meditated in the night with my heart, and I was exercised, and I swept my spirit*: behold an exact examination of his thoughts and deeds. And this exercise of examining pass'd down to the Saints of the new testament with no less rigour, but rather more, than it was used by these Saints of the old law; as it is evident by

James 4.

Greg. ad interog. 11. Aug. Cant.

See of this
St. Aug. 11. de ser. Do. c. 13. l. 12. de Trin. c. 12.

How suggestion, delectation, and consent must be avoided,

The first diligence necessary.

Job 9. Psalm 76.

1 Cor. 4. by St. *Paul*, who so exactly had examin'd his own soul on this behalf, that he durst affirm, that to his knowledge, he was guilty of no fault or offence at all towards God; tho' yet in this he would not pronounce himself justified. And hence proceeded the custom of other holy men, retain'd until this day in God's church, by such as are careful in this battle; which is to examine exactly, and often, their own conscience, both for thoughts, words, and deeds. And this the first diligence.

The second diligence is mortification.

The second is to attend to mortification of our passions, evil affections, and sinister inclinations, proceeding ordinarily from the foresaid infection of our sensual concupiscence; for by this means we come to weaken the forces of our enemies, and to cut off, as it were, his chief battery against us. And as nothing is more effectual to this end, than to chastise and keep our bodies low by corporal affliction; it is wonderful how all the ancient Saints, even from the Apostles themselves, did frequent this wholesome remedy. For of the Apostles in general, there is left written by one of them, They pass'd their lives in much fasting, much watching, hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness: whereof the first two at least, must needs be presumed to have been voluntary.

2 Cor. 11.
2 Cor. 5.

St. *Timothy* and St. *Paul* abstained from wine.

Chrys. in
1. ep. ad
Tim. c. 5.
& hom. 2.
ad Pop. An-
tiochenum.
Acts 18.
& 21 Num.
6. *Joseph. l. 2*
de bello
c. 15.

The same Apostle St. *Paul*, writing in like manner to his scholar *Timothy*, and persuading him not to drink altogether water; but to use some little wine, at least for his stomach and frequent infirmities, does well shew thereby, as St. *Chrysostom* also notes, and the matter is clear, that St. *Timothy* did wholly abstain from wine; and that, as may be believed, by St. *Paul's* own example, who by his fact of going into the temple, purified as a Nazarene, and with them, upon one day's warning only (whereas the Nazarenes were bound to abstain thirty days from wine, before they enter'd) is infer'd, that St. *Paul* was utterly abstemious, that is to say, did drink no wine at all; and so lived always a Nazarene's life:

life : wherein it is likely his scholar *Timothy* would imitate him, as also in the rest of his bodily chastisements; and mortifications of his flesh.

The like is recounted of other apostolical men, that lived in those days : as for example, of *St. James* the Apostle, surnamed the just, of whom is recorded by *Egesippus*, and related by *Eusebius* : that besides other austerities of life concerning his apparel, diet, and continual mortification ; his exercise of praying on his knees was such (a thing that delicate Christians of our days much fly) that the skin of his knees was made as hard, as the brawn of a camel's knee. And yet if we consider, what necessity a man, that was so holy and just, and had lived so long with Christ himself, might have of so much prayer, in respect of us now ; the difference will quickly appear. The like, or rather greater severity of life does that learned Jew and Philosopher *Philo* recount of his countrymen, the first Christians in *Alexandria* under *St. Mark* the Evangelist, sent thither from *Rome* by *St. Peter*, to begin that church, which he did with such exact piety, sanctity, simplicity, abstinence, and mortification ; as moved their adversaries in religion (whereof *Philo* was one, who lived at that time, and saw their lives) to extream admiration. And this direction, no doubt, *St. Mark* * carried from *St. Peter*, that sent him thither ; as *St. James*, and other Apostles, and *St. Mary Magdalen* (that perhaps exceeded them all in this kind) took the same from Christ himself. And such as follow'd them in this exercise of austerity of life, had their warrant both from these men's example, and from the Spirit of God instructing them ; whereof you may read infinite examples in the foregoing *Egesippus*, and *Eusebius*, and others, that wrote the lives of Saints in those first ages ; as also in *St. Athanasius* in the life of *St. Anthony* the monk ; and in *St. Hierom*, who register'd the acts of *St. Paul* the hermit, and of *St. Hilarion*. The like you may see in *Joannes Cassianus*, *Palladius*, *Joannes Climacus*, and others,

The austerity of *St. James* and others. *Egesipp. apud Euseb. lib. 2. hist. cap. 22.*

The austerity of *St. Mark* and his first Christians in *Alexandria*.

Philo. l. 4. de vita Contemplat.

* *Euseb. in Chron. An. Christi 46.*

St. Augustine's worthy saying. lib. 1 Confess. c. 5.

others, that have recorded things of admiration in this behalf, which we now are almost afraid to read; and much more to imitate. All which rigour of exact life and mortification in these ancient Christians, tended notwithstanding to this end: to mortify their bodies, subdue their flesh and sensuality, repress the motions of their concupiscence; that thereby they might stand the more secure in this battle of resisting sin; whereof St. Augustine used those effectual words: *Moriar ne moriar*. I will die, to the end I may not die, that is to say, I will mortify my flesh, lest I be slain in this battle.

This was the beginning of the austerity of life in those first fathers, and founders of our religion. This was the cause of first leaving the world, and flying to the desert. This was the origin of all monasteries, cloisters, hermitages, cells, and solitay habitations: and finally, this was the reason of all breach and separation from flesh and blood, and from all worldly conversation; thereby to avoid all occasions of external temptations; and by that means, to gather the more force and strength, to resist the internal. In which internal conflict notwithstanding, the combat oftentimes was so sharp and vehement; that it is most wonderful to consider what is recorded by the foresaid writers, touching assaults endured by those ancient Saints, that had left the world; and what extream pains and afflictions they sustain'd willingly, to continue their resistance against their spiritual adversary. Which things were set down, no doubt, and left written to us by God's holy providence, for our confusion that now live, who are so careless and negligent in resisting the assaults and temptations of sin, that we make no account thereof at all.

A marvelous example of St. Hierom.

2 Cor. 12.

St. Hierom, in a certain epistle, bears witness of himself, that, having abandon'd the world, and retired himself into a wild desert of Syria, he was most terribly tempted, not unlike to St. Paul, with suggestions of
the

the flesh. But what did he to resist this temptation? and what success had he therein? you shall hear his own declaration. “How often, says he, being in
 “the wilderness and vast desert, burnt up, and
 “scorch’d by the extream heat of the sun (wherein the
 “monks of my time had their ugly habitations) was I
 “tempted with thoughts of *Roman* delights, &c. I
 “sate alone, for I was replenish’d with sorrow and
 “bitterness. The parts of my body were now become
 “deform’d and ugly, with continual wearing of my
 “sack: and my skin was as black as the skin of an
 “*Æthiopian*. I wept daily, and pass’d my time con-
 “tinually in groaning: and when, at length, sleep
 “came upon me against my will, I lay down, and
 “did beat my bare bones, scarce hanging together,
 “against the ground. Of my meat and drink, I will say
 “nothing; whereas in this place, we, that are monks,
 “do use only cold water, even when we are sick; and
 “do think it a great delicacy, to taste any one thing,
 “that savours of the fire.

Hieron. ep.
22 ad Eust.
Paulo post
initium.

The auster-
 rity of old
 monks.

“I therefore being in this case; and having shut
 “my self up in this prison, for fear of hell fire, and
 “for avoiding of sin; being not only companion to
 “scorpions and wild beasts, but wholly worn out with
 “continual fasting: yet I could not avoid the tempta-
 “tions of the flesh, &c. Wherefore I did cast my self
 “down at the feet of Jesus: I did bathe the ground
 “about me, with tears; and dried the same up again
 “with my own hair. I did repress my rebellious
 “flesh, with continual abstinence of whole weeks to-
 “gether. I am not ashamed to confess this misery of
 “my wretched state. I remember, that I cry’d unto
 “Jesus, whole days and nights together; and ceased
 “not to beat and knock my breast; until he arose,
 “and rebuked my enemy; and thereby restored to me
 “my former tranquillity. I persever’d in prayer, in
 “that forlorn and savage desert (being angry and ri-
 “gorous against my self) and I hamper’d with im-
 “prisonment

St. Hieron.
roms’s
combat
with tempta-
tions of
the flesh.

The conclusion of
striving in
the end.

Cant. 1.

The miserable state
of most
Christians
at this day.
Eccles. 4.
Prov. 33.

The description of
a man that
follows his
own concupiscence.
Prov. 7.

"prisonment my miserable flesh, as our Lord is my
"witness; until at length, after infinite tears shed,
"and my very sight dazled with long looking up, and
"beholding the heavens, I seem'd again to be restored
"to the company and fellowship of Angels: where-
"with being made exceeding joyful; and replenish'd
"as it were with all kind of divine and celestial solace;
"I began to sing again, within my self, that most
"pleasant song: *We shall now run after the sweet sa-
"vour of thy fragrant ointments, O Lord."*

Thus did these blessed Fathers and Saints of God
behave themselves: and thus did they esteem them-
selves bound to do, to resist sin, and to maintain their
integrity, against the wicked assaults of their ghostly
enemy; remembering how it is written: *Fight va-
liantly for thy soul: and strive unto death for mainte-
nance of justice.* But alas, dear brother, how do we be-
have ourselves in this important business? what do we?
what pains take we? what attention, what vigilancy do
we hold upon our thoughts, words and actions? what
caution do we use? what resistance do we make? is
there any man that flies the occasions of sin; or rather
provokes not the same? is there any, now a days, that
mortifies his flesh; or rather does not cherish and
pamper it to wickedness? is there any man, that re-
presses his own appetites? that stands in fight against
sensual suggestions? nay rather, do not all the world
run after their own concupiscence? do they not yield
themselves, as slaves, to every temptation, that does
arise? to every assault, that the enemy makes? do
they not devour every hook, which the devil lays
to intrap them, and swallow down every poison'd bait,
that is cast for their destruction? O merciful Lord!
what a pitiful state of the world is this? Harken, good
Christian, how this case of a careless sensual man is de-
scribed, even by the very finger of God himself. "I
looked forth thro' the bar, of my window (says the
"divine wisdom of God) and I saw, and consider'd a
fond

‘ fond young fellow, who wallk’d by corners of the
 “ streets in darkness, &c. And there ran unto him a
 “ woman, deck’d up like a harlot, and prepared to de-
 “ ceive souls, &c. She enticed him by flattery, and
 “ many sweet speeches ; and entangled him with strong
 “ allurements. Presently he follow’d her, as an ox led
 “ unto the slaughter, and as a wanton skipping lamb,
 “ that is carried to the shambles ; like a bird that
 “ makes haste to the snare, so follows he : not know-
 “ ing (silly sot) that he is drawn to fetters ; and that
 “ the danger of his soul depends thereon ; until his
 “ heart be stricken thro’, &c.”

This is the description which the Holy Ghost uses, to
 set out unto us, of the miserable condition of a dissolute
 and wretched Christian, who has no care of resisting
 temptations, but follows every suggestion of his own
 sensual appetite ; and thereby, not only wounds to
 death his own heart and soul, by every temptation, he
 yields unto ; but also, as the scripture here notes, en-
 thrals himself in such miserable bondage and captivity,
 and casts himself into so strong bands and inextricable
 fetters of his enemy ; that he cannot possibly afterwards
 deliver himself ; but by some wonderful and extraordi-
 nary miracle, wrought by God. For as Christ’s A-
 postle writes : *He that yieldeth to sin, becometh the bond-
 slave of sin,* And the Holy Spirit of God, in another
 place says ; *The wicked man is wrapt in the bands, and
 chains of his own wickedness.* Which bands and chains
 are so knit, and strongly link’d together in a sensual
 man ; that, being once entangled, he is drawn from
 link to link, and encompass’d about with so many
 folds ; that he seldom can escape, until he come to the
 end thereof, which is fasten’d even in hell it self.
 This thing do these holy * fathers of God’s Church
 express by this deduction : in careless and negligent
 Christians, suggestion (which is the beginning of this
 dangerous and infernal chain) draws after it thought ;
 cogitation draws affection ; affection, delectation ; de-
 lectation,

The bon-
 dage and
 danger by
 yielding to
 our concu-
 piscence.

Joan. 8.

Prov. 5.

The chains
 of sin.

* See St.
Greg. l. 4.
Moral. c.
25.
Isid. l. de
sum. bono.
c. 23.

lection, consent; consent, operation; operation, custom; custom, despair of God's mercy; despair brings in the defending of sins committed; after which follows immediately, both vaunting, boasting, and glorying in wickedness, which is the next inseparable link to damnation it self.

The miseries of them that resist not sin.

- Eccl. 18.* To these miseries, and inexpressible calamities is the world brought, by not resisting the temptations of sin; but yielding to every unlawful motion of our sensual appetite. According as it was foretold so long ago: *If thou give to thy soul her concupiscence, she will make thee a joy to the enemies.* O ye children of Adam! why consider you not this thing? O worldlings! O careless Christians! why forget you this point, so necessary to be ponder'd? is it possible that men should be so negligent in their own apparent, and irremediable dangers? the world is now come to that desperate condition, described by *Job*, wherein men drink up sin, as beasts do water: that is, without difficulty, scruple, remorse of conscience, fear of hell, care, doubt, examination, or thought. We are now come to that obstinate contempt foreprophecied by *Daniel*: *Wicked men will do wickedly, and will not understand.* Nay, the most part of men are enter'd into that dreadful, and most horrible plight, whereof the wise man said: *The impious man when he is come to the depth of wickedness, contemneth.* But what are the words immediately ensuing? *But ignomy and reproach follow him.* Which St. Paul expounds more plainly in this manner; *Whose end is destruction.*
- Job. 15.*
- Dan. 12.*
- Prov. 18.*
- Phil. 3.*

The conclusion of this part.

Wherefore, he that is a good Christian indeed, and desires to enjoy the fruit of that vocation: let him beware of this perilous labyrinth; and learn to resist his carnal appetites betime. Let him crush the head of the serpent at the first entrance of unlawful suggestions; as in the second part of this *Directory* he shall more particularly be instructed to do. In the mean space, this already spoken shall be sufficient, to declare the great importance, weight, and necessity of this affair, and the manifold

manifold mischiefs, which ensue unto the world, for want of watchfulness and diligence in this war.

S E C T. III.

Christian duty for abounding in good Works.

AND thus having shew'd how bad soldiers we are in fighting, and resisting our enemy ; it remains to consider, how prudent stewards and labourers we are, for encrease of our gain and spiritual riches, by the exercise, negotiation, and traffick of good works. About which point is to be observed, that man, from his first fall in paradise, was assign'd to travel and take pains in this kind of exercise ; and in no sort to be idle. For so it is plainly set down in the book of *Genesis* : *Gen. 2. Man was placed in paradise to labour.* And after that, in divers places in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God exhorted men, to be industrious, and diligent ; to till such land, as God had lent them, for their gain, *Prov. 12. Eccle. 20. Hosea 10.* which the Prophet *Hosea* interprets thus : *Seminate vobis Justitiam : Sow to your selves justice.* And the wise man more plainly : *Whatsoever thy hand can do, do it instantly.* *Eccle. 9.* The reason of which exhortation is set down in another place : *Anima operantium impinguabitur.* The soul of such as labour, and take pains shall be fatned ; and again : *Seminanti justitiam, merces fidelis.* To him that sows justice or good deeds, there remains a faithful and just reward. In respect whereof in the description of a blessed and fortunate man, it was put for one principal quality by the Prophet ; *that he received not his soul in vain ;* but labour'd and employ'd the same to his greatest benefit. And this in the Old Testament. But in the New, wherein the most excellent merits of Christ do yield inestimable dignity to all good works, that are done in his name, this precept of labouring has more place, and is more seriously recommended : for by Christ's spirit and abundance of

R

grace

Psalms 23.

Of labouring, in the New Testament.

grace, we are more enabled to perform the same; as may appear by the words of God himself in *Ezekiel*: where foretelling the times of the Messias to come, he says, *And I will put my Spirit in the midst of you, and will make, that you walk in my precepts, and keep my judgments and do them.* Which is to be understood of the performance of good works, according as St. Paul describes the condition of Christian people, when he calls them: *an acceptable people, cleansed by Christ's blood, to be followers of good works.* And in another place, he defines a good Christian to be: *the hand-work of God, created in Christ, to walk in good works.* And yet further Christ himself in the Gospel declares plainly, what the state and condition of Christians is in this life, by the parable wherein he likens himself to the rich banker, who committed divers sums of money to his servants, with this charge: *Negotiamini dum venio*: make ye your traffick until I come, and call for an account.

The vocation of a Christian.
2 Col. 2.

By all which it is most manifest, that the life and vocation of a Christian in this world; is to labour and make his gain, by the talents that God has lent him; and to *fructify in all good works*, as St. Paul exhorts us. Hereby also does appear, that the time of this our life is nothing else, but a certain season allotted, wherein to sow and plant; nothing else, but a fair or market wherein to traffick, negotiate, and make our exchange for the kingdom of heaven. In which affair and negotiation, he that is diligent, laborious, and industrious; is accounted *a wise man*, even by God's own mouth: as on the contrary, the careless, slothful and negligent man is call'd the *child of confusion*, void of wit, and subject to all misery, contempt, and beggary. Hence are those speeches of holy scripture: *Manus fortium dominabitur*: The hand of the strong shall rule. And again: *Robusti habebunt divitias*. The strong shall have riches. And yet further: *he that diligently tilleth his soil, shall advance to a great height his ricks of corn.* And to the negligent it is said, on the

Ezek. 36.

Titus 2.
The definition of a good Christian.
Ephes. 2.

Luke 19.

Prov. 10.

Prov. 12.

Prov. 11.

Eccles. 20.

Prov. 10.

the other side: *Egestatem operata est manus remissa*: the slothful hand has wrought poverty. And finally, the more to confound our folly and laziness in this point, and to make deeper impressi^on thereof in our hearts, we are by holy writ referr'd, even unto the school and instruction of unreasonable creatures. *Go to the Emmet, O sluggard* (says the wisdom of God) *and consider her ways, and learn wisdom; who, whereas she has no guide, nor master, nor captain, prepareth meat for herself in the summer, and gathereth in the harvest for to eat.* By which words we are admonish'd, not only what is our duty in this life, concerning labour in good works; but also, that the most excellent and supreme point of wisdom, which possibly can be imagined, is, to gather store in this time present, for the time to come; and to make our provision in this world, whereon to live in the country, whereunto we take our journey.

Prov. 6.

This is that great and rare wisdom, which is call'd in scripture, *The wisdom of Saints*: or rather as St. Paul terms it; the wisdom of God himself, not known to the world: that wisdom; which *Isaiab* calls *divitias salutis*: the treasure of salvation: That, whereof the wise man says, *Cogitare de illa, sensus est consummatus*: to think, and ponder upon this kind of wisdom, is most perfect understanding, and prudent knowledge. Again: *God loveth no man, but him that dwelleth or remaineth with wisdom.* And finally, to stir us up to this kind of wisdom, he makes an ample exhortation; with a declaration of the nature, dignity, and utility thereof, to this purpose: "Come to this wisdom, as he that sows upon hope of harvest; and have patience for a time, to expect her fruits. Thou must labour and take pains a little in her work; and soon after thou shalt taste of the commodities, she brings forth. O how ungrateful is she to the ignorant! and a fool will not abide her. She is not revealed to many: but to whom she is known, with them she remains until she bring them unto the

Christian wisdom wherein it consists.
Prov. 9.
Rom. 11.
Isaiab 33.
Sap. 6.
Sap. 7.

Ecc. 6.

“ fight and presence of God himself, &c. Hearken
 “ therefore my son, and follow her ways with all thy
 “ force, &c. For at the last day, thou shalt find rest in
 “ her; and she shall turn thee to great joy and consolation.”

This was that blessed and wise man's counsel; and for fulfilling of this counsel, as also for obtaining the rest, joy, and final consolation here mention'd, St. Paul cries so vehemently unto us, exhorting us every where to do good works, and that abundantly, instantly, in all times, to all men, upon all occasions, and with immoveable constancy; assuring us, that our labour herein shall not be lost, but that the time shall come when we shall reap the fruit thereof. To which purpose also appertains the parable of the prudent steward, propounded by our Saviour; with a very effectual exhortation in the end, that in this life we should purchase ourselves friends, by the use and distribution of our wicked mammon, who may afterwards make us place in heaven. To this effect are directed all those admonitions of holy scripture. *Work your own salvation.* Again: *Brethren, be ye careful to make your vocation and election sure, by good works.* And St. Paul adjoins another circumstance; thereby to move us the sooner, saying: *While we have time, let us do good works:* insinuating hereby, that this time present was allow'd us, only for that purpose; and that, this time being past, there would be no more place for such matters; according to that sage admonition of our Saviour himself: *The night will come, when no man can work any more.*

The diligence of old Christians to work while they had time.

For preventing of which night, and to take time while it served, very strange it is to consider the pains, watchfulness, and diligence, which ancient holy Christians in former ages did use; and the senseless forgetfulness wherein we pass our days now. They imitated the good husbandman, who is careful to cast his seed into the ground, whilst fair weather lasts; and the diligent merchant, who neglects not to lay out his money, while the good market endures. They knew,
 the

the time would not be long, which they had to work in; and therefore they bestir'd themselves seriously whilst opportunity was present. Hence among other things, proceeded all those goodly monuments of alms-deeds, and charitable works yet extant in the world, as witness of their exercise in this kind of wisdom. So many commonwealths establish'd; so many churches built, and endued with abundant maintenance; so many bishopricks, deanries, arch-deaconries, canonries, prebendaries, chantries, and benefices; so many hospitals, and houses of orphans, and fatherless infants; as also for the relief of other poor, impotent, and distressed people. So many seminaries, schools, halls, colleges, and universities for encrease of learning: so many bridges, highways, causeys, town-houses, and other publick commodities: so many places of prayer and devotion; as, monasteries, abbeys, priories, convents, nunries, hermitages, cells, oratories, and other like, for repose of virtuous people that would leave the world, and betake themselves only to the contemplation of heavenly things, and exercise of a more holy, and retired life.

All which charitable deeds, and many more that cannot be recounted, came out of the purses and coffers of godly Christians, in ancient times: who very often gave, not only of their abundance and superfluities; but spared also from their own sustenance and necessary relief: as also took away and alienated many things from their own children and posterity, to employ them in these charitable uses, for the benefit of their souls. Whereas, on the contrary, we that now live in this miserable corrupt time, are so far from giving away our necessities, and plucking from our own bodies, towards these offices of charity; that we make no scruple at all, to spoil the poor and godly of these benefits and reliefs, which were left unto them by our fore-fathers. And as for our own superfluities, we seek commonly to employ them, rather on hawks, and dogs, and brute beasts (as sometimes also upon much more vile uses)

The charitable deeds of our ancestors, and want thereof in us.

than in charitable deeds, to the relief of our poor brethren, and to the ease of our own souls in the life to come. So utterly fails the whole world at this day, in performing this point of doing good deeds.

The perfection of Christian vocation, if it were fulfill'd.

Wherefore, to draw a conclusion of this whole chapter, it may appear, by what has hitherto been said: first, what a perfect and most excellent creature a good Christian is; whose life is nothing else but a continual warfare and resistance of all sin, in thought, word, and deed; and an incessant exercise of all piety and good works, which his hand, or heart may possibly perform. Which kind of life, if it were exactly fulfill'd, in such sort as it was prescribed by Christ the author of our profession; most evident it is, that the commonweal of Christianity would be a most heavenly, blessed, and angelical state upon earth, wherein, no fraud, no deceit, no malice, no contention, no wickedness, injustice, or violence would reign: and consequently, either few, or no temporal laws would be necessary for punishment of the same. For, by the only law of religion and conscience, all would be simplicity, all purity, all truth and honesty, concord, love, and charity one towards the other; as we read, it fell out in the first days and ages of Christian religion, when this law of conscience was yet observed. But now, as the world has abandon'd commonly in every place, these two principal parts of Christian duty, (I mean the resisting sin, and performing good works) a great part of Christians are become more sensual, and dissolute in manners and life, than perhaps ever were the more civil part of Gentiles and Infidels; which is a most intolerable dishonour to our Saviour, who gave his life for reducing us to a better conversation. For which cause, in all reason, right, and equity, the punishment of such unworthy Christians, must needs be far greater, at the latter day; than of the very Pagans, who had not that light and assistance for their direction; according to that speech of Christ to certain ungrateful towns and

and places, wherein he had preach'd: *Wo be to thee Chorozaïn: wo be to thee Bethsaïda: for that, if the like things had been done in Tyre and Sydon (which are heathen cities) that have been done in thee; they would have repented: and therefore I tell you, that it shall be easier for them, in the day of judgment, than for you.* Which point, would to God, men now a-days would attentively consider. Luke 10.

Secondly, it may appear by these, and other things before set down, what a marvellous different life the good, and evil do pass in this world: and consequently, how different a lot they are to receive in the next, from him that rewards each man, as *St. Paul* says, according to his actions, either good, or evil. For first: the virtuous Christian does not only abstain from committing sin (especially that which divines call mortal, and which each man by God's assistance may avoid) but also by continual resisting and fighting against the same, he encreases daily, and hourly his merit for the crown of heaven. But the careless man, by yielding consent of heart to every lewd concupiscence that offers itself, does not only not gain any merit at all; but heaps up sin upon sin without end, measure, or number. Again, the careful man, besides avoiding sin, and the gain which he gathers by fighting in that combat, performs also infinite good works, at least in heart and desire, which is accepted by God for deeds, where further ability fails. But the loose Christian, neither in heart, or deed does any good at all; but, in place thereof, commits infinite evils. For, as the one employs his whole mind, heart, words, and hands, with all the forces, and other abilities, that God has given him, to the doing of good, and resisting of evil; so the other bends all his powers of body, mind, and fortune, to the service of vanities, the world, and of his own flesh, and to the encrease of the enemies of Christ's kingdom. And hereby, as the former encreases hourly in merit before God, so the latter continually,

The difference of the virtuous and wicked in this world; and in the next. *Rom. 2. 2 Tim. 4. 2 Cor. 5.*

A point of great consideration.

tinually, by all his thoughts, words, deeds, and endeavours, does multiply his sins, whereunto by God's justice are due the torments of hell. And in this contrary course, they pass over their lives, for twenty, thirty, forty, more or fewer years, and so come to die, each man with his contrary account : which being such as I have said, can it be marvellous to any man living, if there be so great diversity in their everlasting conditions in the world to come ; seeing their dealings, and reckonings were so opposite and unequal in this present life.

The conclusion
with an exhortation.

Learn then, my dear brother, if thou be wise, by these and the like considerations, to awaken thy self, while thou hast time. If thou find by examination of the two aforesaid parts of Christian duty, that hitherto thou hast walked awry, and hast not perform'd the life required in that vocation ; thank God for this so great a benefit, as is the revealing of thy danger, while yet there is time and place to make amends. Many, no doubt, are this day in torments, and will be everlastingly, who pass'd over their lives without ever thinking of these affairs : and if they had received so special favour, as thou dost now, in having these matters so particularly laid before thee ; perhaps they had escaped those eternal calamities, wherein now they are fallen without possibility of redress. Use then God's mercy to thy gain, dear Christian, and not to thy greater, and more intolerable damnation. Cast not away wilfully, that most precious jewel, thy soul, which Christ has bought so dearly, and which he desires so vehemently to save, and enrich with grace, and everlasting glory ; if thou wouldst yield the same into his hands, and be content to direct thy life according to his most holy and sweet commandments. Remember, often, what thou wilt desire to have done and perform'd at the hour of thy death : to which purpose read, and ponder well the eighth and ninth chapter of this first part.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

The account Christians must yield to God, of the foresaid duties and offices; as also, of the majesty, severity, terror, and other circumstances of that Reckoning-day; with two several times appointed for that purpose.

SECT. I. *A point of great WISDOM.*

AS in every office, and charge committed to a servant in this life, it is a principal point of wisdom, to consider, and bear in mind, what account, and reckoning will be made thereof by him who placed him in that charge; as also what nature and disposition his master is of in taking his account; that is, whether exact or remiss, facile or rigorous, mild or stern; and whether he has power to punish at his pleasure, if he finds him faulty: even so it behoves a careful Christian in the charge of his life and duty before mention'd and declared, very diligently to weigh, and ponder with himself, what manner of reckoning his Lord and Saviour will require at his hands, and in what terms, either of rigour or lenity, facility or severity, he will proceed with him in that account. Which thing, a prudent man may easily conceive, considering these two following points.

First, if we weigh the manner, order and circumstances, whereby his charge, that is, the law and rule of his conversation, was publish'd, and proclaim'd by God to the world. Which thing is set out at large in the book of *Exodus*, wherein is described with what marvellous, and dreadful majesty, fear, terror, thunder, and sound of trumpets, the ten commandments of God (which contain the perfect form of a virtuous life) were pronounced by Angels to the people of *Israel*. How the law of good life was publish'd. *Exod.* 19. & 20. *Acts* 7.

Which

Heb. 12.

Which terror and majesty St. *Paul* applies expressly to this meaning, that we should greatly tremble to violate or transgress this law, which was deliver'd with such circumstance of dread and horror ; seeing that the laws of great princes and potentates, are exacted commonly and executed upon the offenders, with much more terror, than they were proclaim'd.

Who and what manner of auditor shall receive our accounts.

2 Cor. 5.

Secondly, the same in part may be conceived, if we consider what Judge or Auditor we shall have in this account. Which St. *Paul* declares plainly telling us : *We must all be summon'd before the tribunal seat of Christ, and every man receive either good or evil, according as he has behaved himself while he lived upon earth.* Which

Mat. 16.

thing Christ himself confirms in divers parables, when he promises to take account of all his talents lent unto his servants in this world. And in St. *Matthew's* Gospel he expresses the particular manner of that account, saying : *The son of man shall come with his Angels in the glory of his Father to take an account, and then shall he give to every man according to his works.* And yet more particularly and severely of the same matter and day :

Mat. 12.

I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment.

Jer. 29.

By which speech of our Saviour we are admonish'd, not only that we shall give an account of our doings, but also that we shall yield the same to himself, who says in another place. *Ego sum Judex & Testis.* I am both Judge and Witness in this account. We are instructed also, that this account will be most exact and exquisite, not omitting the least errors and offences that have pass'd in our life : that particular reward or punishment will be assign'd to each man, conformably to the quality of his account. And finally, that this account or day of reckoning (to declare the terror and majesty that will be used therein) is call'd here by Christ, a judgment and tribunal, wherein sentence of life or death is to be pronounced.

Of which Judgment or Accounting-day, the scripture notes unto us two kinds. The first whereof is call'd a particular Judgment, it being exercis'd upon every soul immediately after her departure from the body, according to the words of holy St. Paul: *It is appointed for every man once to die, and after that to have his Judgment.* The second is call'd a general Judgment, for it will be executed upon all the world together at the last day, when mankind will be translated from this terrestrial habitation. And of this Judgment are to be understood as well those former words of Christ, touching his coming in glory, as also infinite other places and passages of scripture, which do forewarn and admonish us of this most dreadful day. And altho' in the first particular Judgment, each soul that departs hence, receives an irrevocable sentence, either of life or eternal death (as may appear by the examples of *Lazarus*, and of the rich glutton, whereof the one was determin'd to everlasting repose, and the other to eternal torments, immediately upon their separation from this world) yet are there alledg'd by the holy saints of God, divers most clear and facile, and evident reasons, why his divine wisdom, besides that first private and particular day of trial, has ordain'd also this second, which will be publick, manifest, and universal.

The first whereof is, that the body of man rising from its sepulchre at that day, may be partaker of eternal punishment or glory with the soul, even as in this life it was participant of the virtues or vices which the soul did exercise. The second reason is because, as Christ was contemptible in this world, and dishonour'd publickly, and put to confusion, with his Saints after him, in the sight of all men: so was it convenient that once in this world, he should shew his Power and Majesty, and that in the sight of all his creatures together, but especially of his wicked enemies, who after that day are never to see or behold him more. The third is, that both wicked sinners and blessed Saints of God, might receive

Two days
of Judg-
ment.I.
Particular.
*Heb. 9.*II.
General.*Luke 16.*I.
Four rea-
sons why
there is a
second
Judgment.
II.

III.

IV.

receive their rewards and final payments openly, in the sight and hearing of each other, to the greater heart-breaking and confusion of the impious, and triumphant joy of the virtuous, who commonly in this world, were contemn'd, over-born, and trodden down by the others. The fourth and last is, because men when they die, do not commonly carry with them all the good or evil which they have wrought, having left behind them divers things which may increase their glory or torments after their death: as are their examples, their instructions given to others, their temporal faculties or abilities, books, preachings, and exhortations, and other like means, whereby good or evil may proceed after their departure. The reward whereof cannot so conveniently be assign'd unto them whilst this world endures, because their joys or punishments in the places where they are, may be daily augmented, by the hurt or good that may be wrought in the world, by those means which they left behind them.

Oh that
men would
consider
well this
reason.
Hereticks.

Loose
poets.

Evil pa-
rents.

So divines do hold, for example sake, that the glory of *St. Paul* is increased daily in heaven, and will be to the world's end by reason of them that daily do profit by his writings and rare example of life upon earth: as also on the contrary part, that the torments of *Arius*, *Sabellius*, and other wicked hereticks, are continually augmented, by the numbers of them, who from time to time are corrupted with their seditious and pestilent writings. The like they hold of dissolute poets, and other loose writers, which have left behind them lascivious, wanton, and carnal devices; as also of negligent parents, masters, or teachers, who by their carelessness, and evil examples, gave occasion to corrupt the children, scholars, or servants committed to their government and instruction. But after this general day of Judgment once past, there will be no more place of meriting upon earth, either good or evil; for the world then and there shall receive an end, and a final sentence be pronounced of whatsoever has pass'd

pass'd from the first foundation, and establishment thereof.

Of this last and general Judgment then, which contains a confirmation or ratifying of the particular Judgment going before, as also a final conclusion and clearing, of all accounts and reckonings with mankind, for his traffick, and stewardship in this worldly pilgrimage; the holy scripture of God admonishes us most carefully to have continual remembrance, and consideration, as of the greatest and most important business that ever we shall deal in, and as the forciblest means to restrain us from sin, that possibly may be devised among frail men in this life. For of this were utter'd those words especially: *Bear in mind the last end of all things; and thou shalt not sin for ever.* Which holy David seem'd to have experienced in himself, when he writ as follows: I have observed the ways of my Lord, neither have I committed wickedness against my God; for that his judgments were always in my sight, and his justice I have not cast out of my mind. And (by these means) I shall be unspotted in his presence, and will keep myself from committing iniquity. Hence it is that the blessed prophet *Moses*, when he saw the people of *Israel* careless in committing sin, cry'd out in zeal: *A nation without counsel is it, and without wisdom, O! that they were wise and understood, and would provide for their last.* As tho' he would say, if they had so much wit as to consider this, and what account they must give to God, at the last day, of their doings; they would not offend him as they do. But as the scripture says in another place, for that this day of reckoning is deferr'd, and, *for that* God's judgment is not pronounced presently against the wicked: *the children of men do commit wickedness daily without all fear.* We have then to consider in this place, for our own instruction, and admonition in this life, what manner of Accounting-day this will be, whose remembrance is so much and often commended unto us in holy scripture. For the better conceiving whereof,

How necessary the remembrance is of the last day of Judgment. *Eccles. 1.*

Eccles. 7.

Deut. 32:

Eccles. 8.

Three
chief points
of this
chapter.

we will divide the following part of this chapter into three principal heads or points. The first whereof, shall be of preparations or preambles, assign'd to go before this day. The second, of things that will pass and be executed at that day. The third, of that which is to follow upon the sentence given and the Judgment ended.

S E C T. II.

*Of preparations, before this general day of
J U D G M E N T.*

Luke 21.

CONCERNING the first, it is to be noted, that for greater dread and majesty of this terrible day, the eternal wisdom of almighty God has ordain'd and reveal'd unto us, that before the coming thereof, when it approaches near, there shall appear most wonderful and horrible preparations, signs and tokens in the world. The first whereof will be the tumults and commotions of all nations, kingdoms, and people upon earth. Which our Saviour himself described, to his Apostles: when you shall hear the fame or bruit of wars and uproars, be not afraid; for these things must be, and yet presently the end of the world shall not ensue. One nation shall rise against another, and one kingdom shall impugn another: there shall be great earthquakes, pestilence and famine: most terrible signs and tokens from heaven. Upon which words of our Saviour, blessed St. *Gregory* has this discourse: “ The
“ last tribulation must have many tribulations going
“ before it; and by these manifold afflictions prece-
“ dent, are declared the eternal afflictions that must
“ ensue. And therefore Christ said, that after wars and
“ uproars, the end should not immediately follow:
“ because, it behoves that many transitory calamities
“ should go before, to denounce unto us the endless
“ woes which are to come after.”

Greg.
Hom. 13.
in Evang.

These

These wars, tumults, and most dreadful confusions here signified by Christ, are specified more plainly in other places of holy writ, but especially by *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and *St. John* in his revelations. Where it is prophesied, that a little before the last general day of judgment, there shall be reveal'd the man of sin, call'd Antichrist; who after the conquest of many kings and kingdoms, will make himself the monarch and absolute owner of the world; and will exercise upon good Christians more barbarous cruelties, and shed more innocent blood within the space of three years and a half (which will be the time of his outrageous tyranny) than all other enemies of God have done from the beginning. The matter is described most strangely by the Prophet *Ezekiel*: in his twenty eighth and twenty ninth chapters; where he mentions a most bloody battle to be fought by *Jerusalem*, wherein he says figuratively, that the weapons of such as shall be slain, will be sufficient to make fire for seven years after; and prophecies thus in the person of God: I have spoken in my zeal, and in the fire of my wrath have I promised, that in the last days when *Gog* and *Magog* shall come into the world, (by these names are signified the army of Antichrist) there shall be a great commotion upon the earth, and the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and all that creeps on the ground, together with all human generation, that lives upon the face of the earth, shall be in an uproar before my face. Hills shall be overturn'd, hedges shall be broken down, and every strong wall shall fall to the ground. I will cast against them the sword from the tops of all mountains; and every man's sword shall be bent against his own brother. My judgment shall be in pestilence and blood, and vehement storms, and in huge stones that shall fall down: I will rain fire and brimstone, &c. And thou son of man, tell unto all the fowls and birds of the air, and to all the ravenous beasts of the field, assemble your

Ezek. 18.

Dau. 7.

Apoc. 13.

See St. Hierom, com.

in c. 7.

Dan. ix

fine.

Ezek. 38.

A most wonderful prophecy of the slaughter to be committed by Antichrist.

your selves, make haste, come together from all quarters, to feed of the sacrifice which I shall prepare unto you, a great sacrifice upon the mountains of *Israel*. You shall eat the flesh of stout champions, and shall drink the blood of princes. You shall feed of their fat until you be cloy'd, and you shall drink their blood till you be drunk, you shall be fill'd at this my table, and all nations shall see this my judgment that I have exercised, and in what manner I have stretch'd out my potent hand upon them.

The two
kinds of
prepara-
tions.

Thus much has the word of God, and much more (which for brevity I omit) of the great miseries, and confusions that will be among men, some little time before the day of judgment. Which time being expired, there shall ensue other preparations in the heavens, and elements of the world, much more dreadful than these; which by Christ himself, and his Saints, are described in this manner. At this day there shall be signs in the Sun, in the Moon, and in the Stars. The Sun shall be darken'd; the Moon shall give no light; the Stars shall fall from the skies; and all the powers of heaven shall be moved. The firmament shall forsake its situation with great violence, the elements shall be dissolved with heat; and the whole earth, with all that is in her shall be consumed with fire. The firm land shall move and leave her place, and shall fly away like a dove: the pressures of all nations upon earth shall be inestimable by reason of these things, and thro' the confusion of hideous noise from the sea, and floods; men shall wither away and dry up, for fear and expectation of the things, which at that day shall happen to the universal world. Thus far out of the Gospel.

Luke 19.
Mat. 24.
Mark 13.
2 Pet. 3.

Apoc. 6.
A most
wonderful
revelation
of *St. John*

But *St. John*, the dearly beloved Disciple of our Saviour, sets out the same more at large, according as it was reveal'd unto him, in this manner; I heard (says he) a voice like the sound of thunder, saying, come and see; I did see. And behold a white horse, and

and one that sate upon him that had a bow; and he went to conquer. After which follow'd a black horse, and one that rid upon him had a pair of balances in his hand. After him pass'd forth a pale horse, and he that sate upon him, was call'd death, and hell follow'd behind him; and he had authority given him to slay by sword, by death, and by the beasts of the earth. The earth did shake; the Sun grew black like a sack; the Moon like blood; the Stars fell from heaven; the sky doubled itself like a folded book; every hill, and island was mov'd from its place; the kings of the earth and princes, and tribunes, and the rich and stout hid themselves in dens, and in the rocks of hills. Then appear'd seven Angels with seven trumpets, and each one prepared himself to found his blast. At the first found, there came hail, and fire mixt with blood. At the second, a whole mountain of burning fire fell into the sea, wherewith the third part of the sea was made blood. At the third blast, there fell a great Star from heaven, named *Absinthium*, burning like a torch, and infected the rivers, and fountains. At the fourth blast, was struck down the third part of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and an eagle flew into the element, crying with a hideous voice, wo, wo, to all them that dwell upon the earth.

Death,
Hell.

Apoc. 8.
Seven
trumpets
and seven
blasts.

At the fifth found fell another star from heaven, which had the key of the pit of hell: and he open'd the pit, and there arose a smoke as from a great furnace, and there came out certain locusts like scorpions, who tormented all such as had not the mark of God in their foreheads. And all these days men did seek death and could not find it. And those locusts were like barbed horses with crowns on their heads: their faces like men, their hair like women, their teeth like lions, and the noise of their wings like the noise of many chariots running together; their tails like scorpions, and their stings were in their tails, their king was an Angel of hell, named *Abaddon*, which signifies a destroyer. At the sixth blast of the trumpet, were

Apoc. 9.

Wonder-
ful locusts.

Apoc. 9.

loosed four Angels tied before, and then rush'd forth an army of horsemen, in number twenty hundred times ten thousand. And I saw the horses, and they that sat upon them had breast-plates of fire and brimstone: the heads of these horses were as lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone, whereby they slew the third part of men which had not repented; and their strength was in their tails which were like serpents. Then was there an Angel, which putting one foot upon the sea, and another upon the land, did swear by him that lives for ever and ever, that after the blast of the seventh trumpet, there should be no more time. And so when the seventh Angel had sounded, there came great voices from heaven, saying, the kingdom of this world is made to our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever.

Apoc. 10.

Apoc. 11.

The seven
cups of
God's
wrath.

And I heard a great voice, saying to these seven Angels, go, and pour out seven cups of God's wrath upon the earth, and so they did. And the first brought forth cruel wounds upon men. The second turn'd the sea into blood. The third turn'd the rivers and fountains into like blood. The fourth afflicted men with fire, and made them blaspheme God. The fifth made them eat their own tongues for sorrow. The sixth dried up the water. And I saw three foul spirits like frogs issue out of the mouth of a dragon. And finally the seventh cup being poured out, there came a mighty voice from the throne of God, saying. It is dispatch'd. And there follow'd lightnings, and thunders, and voices, and earthquakes, such as never were seen since men dwelt upon the earth. Thus far this Apostle, Evangelist, and Prophet, *St. John*.

A confide-
ration up-
on the pre-
mises.

And now tell me Christian, is it possible for any tongue, either human or angelical, to express a thing more forcibly than is here set down? what mortal heart can chuse but tremble, even at the reading and remembrance only of these unspeakable and incomprehensible terrors? what manner of day will that be,
think

think you, when the heavens will mourn, the whole earth will shake, the Sun and Moon lose their light, the Stars fall down, the sea and floods forsake their channels and natural courses, all the elements be dissolved, the face of the earth overflow'd with blood, and the universal world on a flaming fire? is it marvel now, if the scriptures avouch that the just man and Angels themselves will be afraid of that day? and then, to reason as St. *Peter* does, if innocency and justice shall scarcely esteem themselves secure in that fearful trial, what will become of sin and iniquity? what will become, I say, of the careless and dissolute Christian, when he will see such a sea of miseries rush upon him? O that men would think upon this day, while they have time! O that they would awake and prepare themselves by a virtuous life, to stand secure and confident at this woful hour! who is there now a-days who takes that care that St. *Jerom* did, who was wont to say (having much less cause than we) *That he did never eat, nor drink, nor sleep, nor take any other action in hand, without the fearful remembrance of this Accounting-day.* And this of the preparations. There follows the execution of things done in that judgment.

Sopho. 3.
Psaln 73.
1 Peter 34

Hier. de
reg. Mo-
nach c. 20.

S E C T. III.

Of things that must pass in this Judgment.

WHEN the former preparation is fulfill'd and finish'd, and the whole world brought to that pitiful state and plight which I have described, then, as we gather out of scripture, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the tribes of the earth will see him coming in the clouds of heaven amidst all his Angels, with much power and glory, in great authority and majesty. And there in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, he will send his Angels with a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from

the four parts of the world, even from heaven to earth. Here is set down the first act of this dreadful judgment, which is the coming of the Judge to his throne and tribunal-seat: so much the more terrible and full of majesty in this his second appearance, by how much more humble, poor, and contemptible he was, and despised in his first being upon earth, for the work of our redemption. So St. *John* affirm'd, that he who was slain as a lamb, should come again to judge, as a lion. Of which coming, the Prophet *Malachy's* words are, *Behold, he comes, says the Lord of Hosts, and who shall be able to abide the day of his coming!* and the Prophet *Isaiab* adds further touching the same coming, *That the very mountains shall melt at that day before his face.* And yet further he describes the same in another place thus: *Behold, our Lord shall come in strength and fortitude, as a storm of hail, and as a whirlwind, breaking and throwing down whatsoever stands in his way, as a rage of many waters that overflow, and rush together, &c.* Whereunto the Prophet *David* annexes, *Fire shall burn forth in his sight, and round about him a mighty tempest.*

The
coming of
the judge.

Apoc. 5. &
13.

Mal. 3.

Isaiab 64.

Isaiab 28.

Psalms 49.

The man-
ner of the
judgment.

Daniel 7.

This terrible Judge then being set, and all creatures of the world convened before him, the scripture relates us the order of that judgment described by *Daniel*: I saw certain seats placed, and the ancient of years sate down in judgment. Thousand thousands were attendant to serve him; and ten thousand hundred thousands stood waiting before him. The judgment was settled, and the books were open'd. Thus much was reveal'd to *Daniel*, without declaration what books those were, but to St. *John* the same were manifest, who expounded the matter thus: *I saw a great white throne, and one that sate upon the same, before whose face heaven, and earth did tremble, &c. And I saw all those that were dead, great, and small, standing before the throne. And books were then open'd---and all those that were dead had their judgment according to the things which*

Apoc. 20.

which were written in those books, every one according to his works. By which words we are given to understand, that the books which at that day will be open'd, and whereby our cause must be discern'd, will be the evidences of our deeds and actions in this life, recorded in the testimony of our own consciences, and in the infallible memory of God's inscrutable wisdom. Whereunto both heaven and earth, which were created for them, will give witness against the reprobate; the Sun and Moon, with all the Stars and Planets, which from the beginning of the world have served them; the elements and other creatures inordinately loved and abused by them; their companions there present with whom they sinn'd; their brethren whom they afflicted; the preachers and other Saints of God whom they contemn'd; and above all other things, the ensign and standard of their redemption, I mean, the triumphant Cross of Christ, which will at that day be erected in the sight of the world. All these, I say, with infinite other things, will then bear witness against the wicked, and condemn them of intolerable ingratitude, in that they offended so gracious and bountiful a Lord who by so manifold benefits allured them to love and serve him.

The store of witnesses against us at the last day.

At this day, says the wise man, shall the just stand in great constancy against those by whom they were afflicted, and oppress'd in this life. And the wicked seeing this, shall be surprized with a horrible fear, and shall say unto the hills, fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sits upon the throne, and from the indignation of the lamb; for that the great day of wrath is now come. O merciful Lord; how great a day of wrath will this be? how truly said the Prophet in his meditation of this day? *Who can conceive the power of thy wrath, or who is able for very fear, to recount the greatness of thy indignation?* this is that day of thine, whereof thy servant said so long before, That thy zeal and fury shall spare

The confidence of the good, and terror of the wicked.

Sap. 5.

Psalms 89.

Prov. 6. none in this day of revenge, nor shall yield or be moved with any man's supplication; nor shall admit rewards for the delivery of any man. This is that most

The terrible day of God.

Ijaiah 13. dreadful day of thine, whereof thy holy Prophet admonishes us, when he said, *Behold, the day of our Lord shall come, cruel day, full of indignation, wrath, and fury, to bring the earth into a wilderness, and to crush in pieces the sinners thereof.* And another Pro-

Joel 2.

phet, of the self-same day: *Behold, the day of our Lord does come; a day of darkness and dimness; a day of clouds and whirlwind, such a one was never seen from the beginning of the world, nor shall be after in all eternity.* This is thy day, O Lord, and so

God's day.

Man's day.

properly thou wilt have it call'd; as it pleases thy goodness to term the course of this present life, the day of man. For as in the time of this present world, thou art content to hold thy peace and be patient, and suffer sinners to do their will; so at this last day, thou wilt rise up and plead for thy own glory, and wilt make thy self known to the terror of thy enemies, according as thy servant *David* foretold of thee, when he said, *Cognoscetur Dominus judicia faciens*: God will be known when he shall come to do judgment. And moreover it is to be remembred, that all men, good and bad, must see and be present at this day, and that none can be exempted: so that whosoever reads this, must know, that he or she must see, and hear, and behold the same, and have their part, and lot therein.

A dreadful day.

Apoc. 20.

Good God! what a marvellous day will this be, when we shall see all the children of *Adam* gather'd together from all corners and quarters of the earth; when (as *St. John* says) the sea and land will yield their dead bodies, and both hell and heaven restore the souls which they possess, to be united to those bodies? What a wonderful meeting will this be, dear Christian, how joyful to the good, and how lamentable, doleful, and terrible to the wicked! the godly and righteous being

to receive the bodies wherein they lived, into the fellowship of their eternal bliss, will embrace them with all possible sweetness, and delight, singing with the Prophet, *Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.* But the miserable damn'd spirits, beholding the carcases, which were the instruments, and occasions of their sins; and well knowing that their unspeakable torments will be increased by their mutual conjunction and association, will abhor, and utterly detest the same, and curse the day that ever they were acquainted together, inveighing most bitterly against all the parts and senses thereof, as against the eyes, for whose curious delight so many vanities were sought; the ears for whose pleasure, and dalliance so great variety of sweet sounds and melody was procured: the mouth and taste, for whose contentment and fond satisfaction, innumerable delicacies were devised. And to be short, the back and belly, with other sensual parts for contentment of whose riotous voluptuousness, both sea, and land were sifted and turmoil'd.

The complaints of the damn'd souls against the bodies.

This will be the most sorrowful condition of these unfortunate souls at that day; but this sorrow will not avail them: for the Judgment must pass. *And then* (says the Scripture) *shall Christ separate the sheep from the goats, and shall place his sheep on the right hand, the goats on the left.* O most dreadful separation! what would *Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey*, and other such potentates of the earth give at that day, to have but the lowest room among them of the right hand? they, I say, who had all this world at their pleasure, and all dignities under their own command, would now make more account of the meanest place and corner among God's elect, than of all the pomp and bravery of ten thousand worlds, if they were to live again: their cogitations at this day being far different from what they were upon earth, and their judgments wholly contrary. But, alas, there is no time for alteration or amend-

Mat. 25.

Too late to repent at the day of Judgment.

ment now. They must stand to that which is past, and according to their former demeanors they must receive their doom. They have a Judge present, whose power they cannot avoid; whose wisdom they cannot deceive; whose equity they cannot corrupt; whose severity they cannot mollify; whose indignation they cannot appease; whose determination they cannot alter; and from whose sentence they cannot possibly appeal.

The treasure of a good conscience at the day of Judgment.

O my dear and loving brother, no tongue of man can express what a singular treasure a good conscience will be at this day, when thou shalt see all the princes and monarchs of this world stand there naked, trembling and pale; being utterly destitute of an answer to the whole multitude of their most secret sins, display'd openly before their faces. An unspotted conscience, I say, at this instant, will be a greater consolation, than all the dignities or pleasures of a thousand worlds. For wealth will not help; the Judge will take no gifts; our own submission will not be admitted; intreaty of friends will not prevail; intercession of Angels and other Saints will have no place, for their glory at this day will (as the Prophet says) be *to bind their Kings in fetters, and noble princes in iron manacles, to execute upon them the judgment prescribed.* Alas, what will all those delicate and dainty people do at this instant, who live now in ease and pleasure, and can take no pains in the service of God, nor abide to hear the naming of this day? what shift, I say, will they find out in those extremities? whither will they turn? whose help will they crave? they will see all things cry vengeance round about them; all things yield them cause of fear and horror; but nothing, any sparkle of hope or consolation. Above them they will behold their Judge offended with their wickedness; beneath them, hell open, and the cruel furnace ready boiling to receive them to torments. On the right hand, will be their sins accusing them; on the left hand, the devils ready to execute God's eternal sentence on them; within them their

Psalm 14.
9.

A most pitiful case and condition.

own

own conscience gnawing ; without them, all the damn'd souls bewailing ; on every side the whole world burning.

O merciful *JESUS*, who art to behold this dismal spectacle ; what a passage will this be ? what will the wicked sinner do, say, or think, when he shall be environ'd with these inexplicable miseries ? how will his heart sustain these anguishes ? what way will he take ? to go back is impossible ; to go forward is intolerable ; to stand there still is not permitted. What then shall he do ? what thou, O Lord, with thy sacred mouth hast foretold ; he shall dry and wither up for very fear ; seek death, and death shall fly from him, cry and beseech the hills and mountains to fall down and cover him, and they refusing to give him that relief, or afford him so great a comfort, he shall stand there as a most desperate, forlorn, and miserable captive, until he receives that dreadful and irrevocable sentence of thine ; *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire.*

Attend
negligent
Christian.

*Mar. 14.
Apoc. 6.
& 9.*

Ibid. 25.

S E C T. IV.

Of the final End, and that which will ensue.

THIS will be the last act and conclusion of this woful tragedy. For so it is recorded by the Judge himself : *Then shall the King say to those on his right hand : Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat, &c.* And to them on his left hand he will say : *Depart from me ye accursed into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil, and his angels ; for I was hungry and you fed me not ; I was thirsty and you gave me not to drink ; I was a stranger and you harbour'd me not ; naked, and you clothed me not ; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.* Then they will say unto him, *O Lord, when have we seen thee hungry, thirsty, or a stranger or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee ?* And he will

Ibid.

will answer: *I tell you because you have not done these things to one of these lesser (your brethren) you have not done them to me. And then these wicked shall go into eternal punishment, and the just into life everlasting.* Hitherto are the words of Christ himself.

Notes upon Christ's last Sentence.

John 3.
Tit. 3.

1 John 3.
& 5.

* Mark well this point, O careless Christian.

The cry and shout upon the Judge's Sentence.

A woful separation.

In which may be noted, first, that in recounting the causes of these miserable mens damnation, our Saviour alledges not want of belief, or that they were not faithful; whereof the reason may be that, which himself utters in another place of infidels, saying: *He that believes not, is already judged.* And St. Paul of a heretick: *That he is condemn'd by his own proper judgment.* Secondly he objects not against them, any actual enormous sins; whereof may be assign'd for a reason, that which St. John insinuates and signifies, that such kind of manifest and deadly sinners are now evidently appertaining to the dominion of Satan. Wherefore Christ urges only against these condemn'd people, certain omissions of good works and charitable deeds, commended unto us by the rule of Christian perfection. *And for these, he pronounces against them his most dreadful sentence of everlasting damnation. Which sentence being once pass'd the Judge's mouth, and received in the ears of all that infinite assembly there present, imagine, thou my Soul, what an universal shout and outcry will thereupon straight ensue. The saved rejoicing, and singing eternal praises to the glory of their Saviour; the damn'd bewailing, blaspheming, and cursing the day of their nativity; the Angels commending and extolling the equity of that judgment, against which the parties that are convicted, will not be able to find the least exception. Consider the intolerable upbraiding of those most insolent infernal spirits, against the miserable condemn'd souls that are deliver'd to their prey; with how bitter scoffs and taunts will they trail them to their torments? with what intolerable insults will they execute the sentence of God against them? consider the eternal separation that now must be made between

fathers

fathers and children, mothers and daughters, friends and companions; the one to glory, the other to misery, without any hope ever to hear or see any more the one or the other. And that which will be as great a grief as any of the rest; the son or daughter going to rest and joy, will not take pity of their own parents or friends that are carried to calamity; but rather will rejoice thereat, because it redound's to God's glory, for execution of his justice, tho' perhaps they were the occasion or material cause of the other's damnation.

O my soul! which now art here considering these things afar off, and then will be present to see them actually before thy eyes; what a doleful separation will this be? what a parting? whose heart would not break at that day to abide this intolerable separation, O! if a heart could then break, and thereby make some end of his pains! but so much ease will not be permitted. O ye children and lovers of this world! where will all your delights and recreations, and vanities be at this day? all your pleasant pastimes? all your pride and bravery in apparel? your glittering in gold? your sweet favours of perfumes? your honours? your adulation of flatterers? your delicate fare and dainty dishes? your musick? your wanton dalliances and pleasant entertainments? where are all your friends and merry companions, accusom'd to laugh and sport the time with you? are all now gone? O vanity of vanities! now when you have most need of them, they are furthest off from you, and the remembrance thereof will do nothing but torment you. O my dear brethren! how sower will all the pleasures past of this world seem at that hour? how doleful will the thoughts thereof be unto us? how frivolous a thing will all our dignities, riches, offices, and other preferments appear, wherein we take such excessive delight now, and do weary our spirits to gain the same? and on the contrary, how joyful will that man be at this instant, who has attended to lead a virtuous life, in resisting sin, and doing good works,

The vanity
of all
worldly
prefer-
ments at
the last.

works, altho' it were with much pain and contempt in this world? he will be a most happy creature for having took to that path; and no tongue but God's, can express his happiness.

The conclusion of the whole chapter with a forewarning.

Wherefore my loving brother, to make an end, here, and to frame no other conclusion of all this whole declaration, than that which Christ himself does make unto us (who being the chief actor that will deal in this affair, knows best what counsel to give) let us consider with ourselves, even in the very bottom of our hearts, how easy a matter it is now in this life, with a little diligence, to avoid the danger of this most dreadful day. For which cause also it is most certain, that the same is foretold us, and so often urged in holy writ for our remembrance, as in like manner, so particularly described by our most merciful Judge and Saviour, to the end we should by these severe and earnest admonitions, be stirr'd up to prepare ourselves for it. So Christ himself does most evidently declare, when after all his former threatnings he concludes in these most sweet words of exhortation. *Watch ye therefore,*

Mark 13.

(for you know not, when the Lord of the house comes)---and that which I say unto you, I say to all, watch. And yet further in another place he adjoins. Attend unto your selves, that your hearts be not overcome with eating, and drinking, and with the cares of this life, and so that day overtake you upon the sudden, &c. Be you therefore watchful, and always pray that you may be worthy to escape all these things which are to come, and to stand before the Son of Man.

Luke 21.

The sweet and fatherly dealing of Christ with us.

2 Peter 3.

These are the words, and forewarnings of thy Judge and Saviour unto thee, my soul. And what more friendly, and fatherly exhortation couldst thou desire? if thou think so, hear yet a further admonition, of his chief Apostle, *The day of our Lord (says he) shall come as a thief (when men think not of it) in which the heavens shall pass with great violence, but the elements shall be resolved with heat, and the earth and the works which*

which are in it, shall be burnt. Therefore, whereas all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of men ought you to be, in holy conversation and godliness, expecting and hastening unto the coming of the day of our Lord, &c. In which words of St. Peter, it is diligently to be noted, that this meeting with the day of Judgment, whereunto he exhorts us, is nothing else, but the due examination of our life, as to the works of piety and conversation : which indeed, is that only sovereign remedy, of which the wise man forewarns us, when he says, *Provide a medicine before the malady, and examine thy self before judgment, and so shalt thou find favour in the sight of God.* Whereunto St. Paul well agrees, saying : *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.* But seeing few men enter into this due judgment of themselves, their life, state, and actions ; hence it comes to pass, that so few do prevent this dangerous day ; so few prepare themselves ; so few accept of the good counsel of Christ : so few are watchful : and so many sleep in ignorance of their own peril, to their irremediable destruction and unavoidable damnation. Our blessed Lord give us his holy grace to look better about us.

How we may go and meet with the day of Judgment.

Ecc. 18.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the nature of Sin, and of the Malice of him that commits the same, and perseveres therein. For the justifying the severity of God's judgments, of which we have spoken in the foregoing chapter.

TO the end that no man may justly complain of the severe account which God is to take of us at the last day, or of the rigour of his judgments, set down in the foregoing chapter ; it will not be

God's hatred against sin.

be amiss to consider in this place, the cause why God does shew such severity against sin and sinners; as may appear that he does, both by that which has been said, as also by the whole course of holy scripture; where almost in every place he denounces his great hatred, wrath, and indignation against the same; as

Psalms 5. where it is said of him, *That he hates all those that*
Sap. 14. *work iniquity.* And again, *That both the wicked man*
Prov. 15. *and his wickendess are hateful in his sight.* And finally,
 16, 20. that the whole life of sinners, their thoughts, words,
Ephes. 11. yea, and their good actions also, are *abominations* unto
Isaiah 1. him, whilst they live in sin. And that which is yet
 more, he cannot abide nor permit the sinner *to praise*
Eccl. 15. *him, or to name his Testament with his mouth,* as the Holy Ghost testifies; and therefore no marvel if he shews such severity against him at the last day, whom he so hates and abhors in this life, while he continues his sinful course, and repents not.

Of which hatred and aversion, there may be many reasons alledged; as, the undutiful transgression, and contempt of God's commandments; the great ingratitude of a sinner in respect of his divine benefits, and the like, which sufficiently justify his indignation and severe hatred against them. But there is one reason above all the rest, which opens the very fountain, and origin of the matter; and this is the most grievous injury done unto almighty God in every mortal sin that we commit: which indeed is so great an injury, that no worldly potentate could bear the same at his subject's hands, and much less God himself (being the omnipotent Lord of all glory and majesty) may in reason let pass unpunish'd an outrage, so often iterated against him, as is sin daily committed by the wicked.

Therefore
 why God
 so hates
 sinners.

For the better understanding of which injury, we are to consider, that every time we commit a mortal sin, there does pass thro' our heart and mind, tho' we mark it not, a certain practical discourse of our understanding, and will, as there does also in every other

other election, whereby we lay before us on the one side, the seeming advantage of that sin which we are tempted to commit; that is to say, the pleasure which allures us thereunto; and on the other part the offence of God, which is the losing of his grace, and friendship by that sin, if we yield unto it. And thus having as it were, the balance there before us, and setting God in one end thereof, and in the other the aforesaid pleasure, we stand in the midst deliberating and examining in a certain manner, the value, and weight of both parts; and finally, do make choice of the pleasure, and reject almighty God: that is, we chuse rather to lose the favour of God, together with his grace, and whatsoever he is worth besides, than to want that pleasure, and delectation of sin. Now then, what can be more opprobrious, and horrible than this? what can be more reproachful to God, than to prefer a most vile pleasure before his infinite Majesty? is not this far more intolerable, than the disgrace offer'd him by the *Jews*, when they made choice of *Barabbas* the murderer and rejected Jesus their Saviour? surely, how heinous soever that sin of the *Jews* was, yet in two points this does seem to exceed it. First, because the *Jews* knew not whom they refused in their choice, as we do. Secondly, because they refused Jesus but once, whereas we refuse him both daily, and hourly, whensoever in our hearts we give consent to mortal sin.

The injury
done to
God by
sin.

Mat. 27.
Mat. 15.

And is it marvel then, that God deals so severely, and sharply with sinners in the world to come, who do use him so opprobriously and contemptibly in this life? undoubtedly the malice of a sinner is great towards God, and he does not only dishonour him by contempt of his commandments, and by preferring most vile, and base delectations before him; but further also, if the matter be look'd into, bears a secret hatred, and grudge against his Majesty; and would, if it lay in his power, endeavour to pull him out of his seat, or at least, wishes in his

The malice of a
sinner to-
wards God.

his heart there were no God at all to punish sin after this present life. Let every sinner examine the bottom of his conscience in this point, to see whether he could not be content, if there was no immortality of the soul, no reckoning after this life, no judge, no punishment, no hell, and consequently no God at all; to the end he might the more securely enjoy his pleasure.

Sap. 1.
Hier. 11.
& 17.
Apoc. 2.

And because God, who searches the heart and reins, sees well this most undutiful and traitorous affection towards him, lurking within the bowels of sinful men (how smooth soever their words may be) hence it comes that in the whole course of holy scripture, he denounces them for his enemies, and professes open war and hostility against them. And then imagine, what a pitiful case these unfortunate men are in (being but silly worms and wretches of the earth) when they have so puissant an enemy to fight against them, as does make the very heavens to tremble at his look.

Rom. 5.
James 4.
1 John 3.

And yet that the case is so, hear what himself says, what he threatens, what he thunders out against them. After he had by the mouth of *Isaiah* the Prophet repeated many sins abominable in his sight, as the taking of bribes, oppressing of poor people, and the like; he defies the doers thereof, as his open enemies, saying, *Thus says the Lord God of Hosts, the strong Lord of Israel: behold, I will be revenged upon my enemies, and will comfort my self in their destruction.* And the Prophet *David*, as he was a man in most high favour with God, and made privy to his secrets above many others, so he, more than any other, does express this severe meaning of God, and infinite displeasure against sinners; calling them his enemies, vessels of his wrath, and ordain'd to eternal ruin and destruction; and complains that the world will not believe this point.

Sinners
enemies to
God, and
God to
them.
Isa. 1.

Psalms 91. An unwise man (says he) will not learn this, neither will the fool understand it. And what is this, O holy Prophet? it follows, *That sinners and workers of iniquity* (after they have appear'd in the world) *do perish everlastingly.*

everlastingly. And what is the reason of this. He answers immediately, *Because thy enemies (O Lord) thy enemies O Lord shall perish, and all they that work iniquity shall be consumed.* Whereby we see, that all sinners are enemies to God, and God to them, as also upon what ground and reason.

But yet, for the further justifying of God's severity, let us consider in what measure his hatred is towards sin; how far it proceeds; within what bounds it is comprehended; or whether it has any limits or bounds at all, or rather is infinite and without limitation. And to utter the matter as in truth it stands, if all the tongues in the world were made one tongue, and all the understandings of all creatures (I mean, of Angels and men) were made one understanding; yet could neither this tongue express, nor this understanding conceive the great hatred which God bears towards every mortal sin which we commit. And the reason hereof is evident in two points, first, because God by how much more he is better than we are, by so much more than we do, he loves goodness and hates sin: and because he is infinitely good, therefore his love to goodness is infinite, and his hatred to evil infinite; and consequently, his rewards also to them both, are infinite and endless, the one in hell, with everlasting misery; the other in heaven, by eternal felicity.

God's hatred is infinite against sin and why.

Secondly, we see by experience, that how much more great and worthy the person is, against whom an offence is committed, so much greater is always the offence: as for example, the self-same blow or injury offer'd to a bond-slave, and to a prince, differs greatly in quality, and in the nature of offence, and consequently deserves far different hatred and punishment. And because, every mortal sin which we commit, is done directly against the person of God himself, whose dignity is infinite: therefore the offence or guilt, of every such sin is infinite, and consequently deserves infinite hatred, and infinite punishment at God's hands.

Why every sin deserves infinite punishment.

T

Hence

Rom. 8.
1 Cor. 1.
The punishment
of Angels.

Hence follows the reason of divers things both said and done by God in the scriptures, and taught by divines, touching the punishments of sin, which seem very strange unto the wisdom of the world, and indeed to them scarce credible. As first of all, the most dreadful punishment of eternal, and irrevocable damnation of so many thousands, or rather millions of Angels, that were created to glory with almost infinite perfection, and that for one only sin, but once committed, and that only in thought, as divines are of opinion.

Of Adam
and Eve.

Secondly, the rigorous punishment of our first parents *Adam* and *Eve*, and all their posterity, for their disobedience; for which fault, besides the chastising of the offenders themselves, and all the creatures of the earth for the same, and all their children and off-spring after them, both before our redemption and after (for altho' we are deliver'd from the guilt of that sin, yet temporal punishments do remain upon us for the same, as hunger, thirst, cold, sickness, death, and a thousand other miseries) besides also the almost infinite number of souls damn'd, before the coming of Christ for the space of four thousand years; as also since, as well infidels, which are not baptized, as others; besides all this, I say (which in man's reason may seem severe enough) God's wrath and justice could not be sufficiently satisfied except his own only Son had come down into the world, and taken our flesh upon him, and by his pains and death made satisfaction for the same.

The value
of Christ's
satisfaction

And when he was now come into the world, and had in our flesh subjected himself unto his Father's justice; altho' the love his Father bears unto him is infinite, and every little pain that he endured for us, and every drop of blood which he shed for our cause, had been sufficient for the whole satisfaction (because his flesh being united to his Godhead, made every such satisfactory action of his of infinite value, and merit, and consequently of infinite satisfaction, correspondent to the infinity of our first parents sin:) yet to the end
that

that God might shew the greatness of his hatred and justice against the said sin, and all others, he never ceased to add affliction to affliction, and to heap torments upon the body and flesh of this his most dear and blessed Son, until he had brought him unto that most ruful plight, that his flesh being all mangled and most lamentably torn in pieces, retain'd not one drop of blood within it. He spared him not even then, when he beheld him sorrowful unto death, and bath'd in that agony of blood, when he heard him utter those most dolorous and compassionate speeches: *O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me!* and after that again, much more lamentably upon the Cross: *O my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* notwithstanding all which cries, and lamentations, his most merciful Father, loving him as he did, would not deliver him; but for the satisfying of his justice, laid on him stripe upon stripe, pain upon pain, torment after torment, until he had render'd up his life, and soul into his said Father's hands; which is a wonderful, and dreadful document of God's hatred against sin, for our example.

I might here mention the sin of *Eſau* in ſelling his inheritance for a little meat: of which St. Paul ſays, *He found no place of repentance after, tho' he ſought the ſame with tears.* I might alſo mention the ſin of *Saul*, who for not killing *Agag* the king of *Amaleck*, and his cattle, as he was order'd, was utterly caſt off by God, tho' he was his anointed, and choſen ſervant before, and could never get remiſſion thereof; altho' both he and *Samuel*, God's holy Prophet, did greatly lament, and bewail, and make interceſſion in that behalf.

In like manner I might alledge the example of king *David*, whoſe two ſins tho' God forgave upon his hearty repentance, yet, notwithstanding the ſaid repentance and ſorrow, and all the weeping, faſting, watching, lying on the ground, wearing of ſack-cloth, and other corporal chaſtiſements, which this holy Prophet records, that himſelf did put in uſe; God puniſh'd

Mat. 26.

Mark 24.

Luke 22.

Mat. 27.

Pſalm 21.

Iſa. 53.

The ſin of
Eſau.

Gen. 25.

& 27.

Heb. 12.

Of *Saul*.

1 Reg. 15.

& 16.

1 Reg. 9.

& 15. &

16.

2 Reg. 12.

Pſalm 9.

36, 68,

108, 101,

29.

him with marvellous severity, by the death of his dearly beloved child, and by many other continual afflictions, and temporal punishments during the course of his whole life. And all this to shew his hatred against sin, and thereby to terrify us from committing the same.

From this also do proceed all those hard and severe speeches of holy writ touching sinners, which coming from the mouth of the Holy Ghost (and therefore no doubt, both true and certain) may justly yield great cause of fear to all such as live in sinful state: as for example, where it is said, *death, blood, contention, edge of sword, oppression, hunger, contrition and whips; all these things are created for wicked sinners.* And again, *God shall rain snares of fire upon sinners; brimstone with tempestuous winds, shall be the portion of their cup.* And yet further in many other places, these and the like most dreadful speeches and comminations are to be found. “God will be known at the day of Judgment upon the sinner, who shall be taken in the works of his own hands.-----Many whips belong unto a sinner.----Let sinners be turn’d into hell.----God shall scatter all sinners, and shall dash their teeth out of their mouths.----God shall scoff at a sinner when he sees his day of destruction come on.-----The sword of sinners shall turn into their own hearts.----The arms of sinners shall be crush’d and broken, and they shall wither and dry up like hay from the face of the earth.----Desire not the glory and riches of a sinner, for thou dost not know the sudden subversion which shall come upon him, for God has given him riches to deceive him therewith.---Behold, the day of our Lord shall come, a cruel day, and full of indignation, wrath and fury, to make desolate the earth, and to crush in pieces her sinners within her. Then shall the just man rejoice, seeing this revenge, and shall wash his hands in the blood of sinners.” These, my brother, and innumerable other

other such sentences of scripture, pronounced by the holy Spirit of God against sinners, may instruct us of their pitiful state, and of the unspeakable hatred of his divine Majesty against them, as long as they persist in their sinful life and conversation.

Out of all which considerations, the self-same holy scriptures do gather certain conclusions greatly to be observed. Whereof the first and more general is, that sin brings all people to misery. Secondly, and more particularly, that he who loves sin, hates his own soul. Or as the Angel *Raphael* utters the same in other words; *They Tob. 12. who commit sin and iniquity, are enemies to their own soul.* Wherefore they lay down to all men this general, severe, and most necessary commandment under menace of incurring all the pains before recited; *Fly from Eccles. 21. sin, as from the face of a snake.* And again; *Beware Tob. 4. thou never consent to sin.* For howsoever the world may make little account of this matter, by whom, as the scripture notes, *The sinner is praised in his lusts and the Psalm 9. wicked man is blessed for his wickedness:* yet most certain it is (for the Spirit of God avouches it) *That he 1 John 3. who commits sin, is of the devil,* and therefore is to receive his portion among devils, and damn'd spirits at the later day.

And is not all this sufficient, most dear brother, to breed in us a detestation of sin with fear, and horror to commit the same? is not this of force, and strength sufficient, to shake the hearts of them that wallow perpetually in the filth of sin, and do commit the same daily without scruple, remorse, or consideration? what desperate obstinacy, and obduration is this? surely we find now by experience, that the Holy Ghost prophesied very truly of these men, when he said: *Sinners Psalm 57. are possess'd with a fury like a serpent, and like a deaf asp, which stops his ears against the inchanter.* This fury, I say, is the fury or madness of wilful sinners, who stop their ears like serpents to all the holy inchantments that God can use for their conversion; that

The obstinacy of sinners.

Psalm 57.

is, to all his internal motions, and good inspirations; to all the remorse of their own consciences; to all the threatnings of holy scriptures; to all admonishments of God's servants; to all examples of virtuous livers; to all the punishments that light upon the wicked; and to all the other means which God uses for their salvation.

The losses
that come
by every
mortal sin.

Good Lord, what man would commit a mortal sin, for the gaining of ten thousand worlds, if he consider'd the infinite damages, hurts, inconveniences, and miseries, which follow the committing thereof? For first, whosoever sins mortally, loses the grace of God inherent in his soul, which is the greatest gift that can be given to man in this life; and consequently he loses all those things which did accompany that grace; as are the infused virtues and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, whereby the soul was beautified in the sight of her spouse, and arm'd against all assaults of her ghostly enemies. Secondly, he loses the favour of God, and consequently his fatherly protection, care, and providence over him; and forces him to be his professed enemy. Which how great a loss it is, we may esteem in part, by the state of a worldly prince's servant and favourite, who being in high esteem and credit with his sovereign, should by some great offence lose all his favour at one instant, and incur his mortal hatred and displeasure.

Rom. 6.

Thirdly, he loses all his inheritance, claim and title to the kingdom of heaven, which is due only by grace, as *St. Paul* notes well; and consequently he deprives himself of all his dignities and advantages depending thereupon in this life; as are the condition and high privilege of being the Son of God; the communion of Saints; the protection of holy Angels, and the like. Fourthly, he loses the quiet, joy, and tranquillity of a good conscience, and all the favours, and comforts, wherewith the Holy Ghost is wont to visit the minds of the just. Fifthly, he loses the merit and reward of his good works done all his

his life before, and whatsoever he does or will do, while he continues in that miserable and sinful state. Sixthly, he makes himself guilty of eternal punishment, and enrolls his name in the book of perdition; and consequently, binds himself to all those miseries and inconveniencies whereunto the reprobate are subject; that is to say, to be an inheritor of hell and damnation; to be in the power of the Devil, and his Angels; to be a slave to sin, and every temptation thereof, and his soul (which was before the temple of the Holy Ghost, the habitation of the blessed Trinity, the spouse of God, and place of repose for holy Angels to visit) now to be a den of dragons, and a nest of scorpions, a dungeon of devils, a sink of all filth and abomination, and himself a companion of the miserable damn'd spirits.

Lastly, he abandons Christ, and renounces all the interest, and portion he had with him, treading him under his feet, defiling his most precious blood, and crucifying him again, as *St. Paul* says, in that he sins against him, who died for sin, and makes himself a persecutor of his Redeemer. For which cause the same Apostle pronounces a most dismal and heavy sentence against such men in these words: *If we sin wilfully after we have received knowledge of the truth; now there is not left a host for sins, but a certain terrible expectation of judgment, and rage of fire which shall consume the adversaries.* To which *St. Peter* agrees, when he says: *For it was better for them not to know the way of justice, than after the knowledge, to turn back from that holy commandment which was delivered to them.*

The losing
of Christ
by sin.

Heb. 10.

2 Peter 2.

This being so, let sinful worldlings go now and so-lace themselves in their vanities, and wantonness as much as they will. Let them excuse and pleasantly defend the same, by saying: pride is but a point of honour; gluttony, good fellowship; anger and revenge, but an effect of courage; lechery, and wantonness a trick of youth: they shall one day find, that

Vain ex-
cuses of
sin.

Gal. 6.

these excuses will not be received, but rather that all such pleasant devises and joys will be turn'd into tears, all such fond conceits into doleful lamentations. They will find to their great cost, that God will not be jested with, but that he is the same God still, and will ask as severe an account of them, as he has done of others before, altho' now it pleases them not to keep any account at all of their life and actions; but rather to turn all to sport and pleasure, persuading themselves, that howsoever God has dealt before with others; yet unto them he will pardon all. But this is a mere madness, a voluntary deluding of our selves. For God himself by his sacred word instructs us to reason after another fashion, which I will here briefly touch, exhorting every prudent Christian seriously to examine the same in his own case.

Rom. 11.

The rea-
soning of
St. Paul.

At what time the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, St. Paul, took upon him to make a comparison between the grievous sins of his nation, the *Jews*, for which they were rejected, and made reprobate by God, and those which Christians do commit after their redemption; he framed this collection concerning God's justice due unto them both, saying: *If God spared not the natural boughs, take heed lest he spare not thee*, which are but an inserted graft. Where he gives this admonition: *Noli altum sapere, sed time*. Be not high minded, but fear. Again, he reasons thus upon the old and the new law. “He that broke the law of *Moses*,

Heb. 10.
Christians
more pu-
nish'd for
sin than
Jews.

“being convicted by two or three witnesses, died for
“the same without commiseration or mercy; and how
“much more grievous punishment then does he de-
“serve, who breaking the law of Christ by wilful sin,
“treads the Son of God under his feet, pollutes the
“blood of the New Testament, and reproaches the
“Holy Ghost.” St. Peter and St. Jude discourse after the like manner touching the sin of the Angels, and ours. “If God spared not the Angels when they sinn'd,
“but did thrust them down to hell, there to be tor-

2 Peter 2.
Ep. Jude.

— mented

“ mented, and to be reserved unto judgment with
 “ eternal chains under darknes : how much less will he
 “ spare us ? and again, if the Angels who surpass us
 “ in power and strength, be not able to bear God’s
 “ horrible judgment against them ; what shall we do ? ”
 and yet further in another place, the same Apostle
 reasons thus : *If the just man shall hardly be saved, 1 Peter 4.*
where shall the wicked man and sinner appear ?

By all which examples, we are instructed, how to
 reason maturely and sincerely in our own cause. As
 for example, each man may truly say thus unto him-
 self : if God has punish’d so severely one sin in the An-
 gels, in *Adam*, and in others before recited : what shall
 I look for, who have committed so many sins against
 him ? if God has damn’d so many souls for lesser sins
 than mine are ; what will he do to me for mine, that
 are far greater ? if God has born longer with me, than
 he has with many others, whom he has cut off, with-
 out giving them time of repentance ; what reason is
 there, that he should bear longer with me ? if *David*
 and others, after their sins forgiven, took such pains
 in afflicting themselves, to satisfy by their temporal
 punishment in this life ; what punishment remains for
 me, either here or in the world to come, for satis-
 faction of so many sins committed ? if it be true what
 our Saviour says : “ That the way is strait, and the
 “ gate narrow whereby men go into heaven, and that
 “ they shall answer for every idle word before they
 “ enter therein.” What shall become of me that do
 live so easy a life, and do keep no account of my deeds,
 and much less of my words ? if good men in old times
 did take such pains for their salvation, and yet, as
St. Peter says, the very just are hardly saved ; what a
 state am I in, who take no pains at all, and do live in
 all kind of pleasure and worldly contentments.

A good
 manner of
 reasoning.

These arguments, consequences, and conclusions,
 are true, good Christian, and would prove more pro-
 fitable to us, if we would exercise our selves therein,
 and

and thereby enter into some thoughts of our own danger, and a just fear of God's severe judgments, without flattering or deceiving our selves. For want whereof, either only or principally, the most part of enormous sins from time to time are committed, according as holy *David* most evidently declares; when having shew'd and detested the multitude of sins which the world commits; he reduces all, as it it were, to two principal causes. Whereof the first is, that men deceive themselves and others, by vain flattery, in diminishing their sins; of whom he says: "They are taken in their own devices, for that they praise the wicked man in the lusts, and desires of his own mind." The second is, because this deceit and flattery is reffer'd commonly by the vicious man, to the driving of God's judgments out of his memory, to the end he may sin with less fear and scruple. For so says the Prophet expressly; "The sinner has exasperated God against him, in that he has said, God in the multitude of his wrath will not require account of my doings." But what effect ensues of this? *He has not God before his eyes; his ways are defiled at all time.* And what is the cause of all this? because the judgments of God are removed from his sight; that is, because he will not consider or bear in mind thy judgments, O Lord, but will needs flatter, delude, and deceive himself. Hence it comes, that he never makes an end of his filthy life and wicked ways, but exasperates thy justice, O Lord, against him, till it be over-late to repent or amend.

Thus said this holy Saint, of wicked sinners: but what of himself? hear his words, dear brother, and imprint them in thy memory: *I have kept the ways of my Lord (says he) and have not done wickedly in the sight of my God, for all his judgments are before my eyes, and I have not cast his justice from me.* Behold the virtuous life of king *David*, and behold the cause thereof, for that God's judgments were continually before his eyes; therefore was his life pure, and void

Two principal causes of deceiving our selves.

Psalms 9.

Psalms 10.

Ibid.

Psalms 17.

The remembrance of God's judgments the cause of virtue.

of

of wickedness, or as in other words, at another time he expresses: *I will confess unto thee, O Lord, in the direction (or purity) of my heart, for that I have learn'd the judgments of thy justice.* And again in the same place; *I have chosen to walk in the way of truth, for that I do not forget, O Lord, thy judgments:* that is, as a little after he expounds the same, *For that I do fear and tremble at thy judgments.* O most excellent effect of the fear of God's judgments! no marvel, it is call'd, the beginning of all wisdom, and the very door and entrance to eternal salvation: no marvel, if the same holy Prophet in the very same *Psalms* prays so heartily: *Strike my flesh through with thy fear, O Lord.*

Psalms 118.

Ibid.

St. Paul after he had shewn to the *Corinthians*, that we must all be presented before the tribunal of Christ, every man to receive according to his merits; concludes to this purpose. Knowing therefore these things, we persuade the fear of our Lord unto all men. And St. Peter, having made a long declaration of the Majesty of God, and of Christ now reigning in heaven, concludes thus: *If then you call him Father, who judges every man according to his works, without exception of persons; do you live in fear, during the time of this your habitation upon earth.* A necessary lesson, no doubt for all men, but especially for such, who by reason of their sinful life, do remain in the displeasure and hatred of almighty God, and hourly do stand obnoxious, as I have shew'd, to the severity of his most dreadful judgments. Whereinto if once they fall (especially by departure from this life) the matter remains remediless for all eternity ensuing, as God himself has forewarn'd us. Which thing being so, what man of wisdom would not fear? what Christian that is careful of his own state, would eat or drink, or take his repose with quiet, till by hearty repentance, and other such means of holy sacraments, as God has left for this purpose in his Church, he had discharged his conscience of the burden of sin, and made an atonement between his

How the
Apostles
did per-
suade us to
fear.

1 Peter 1.

Heb. 10.

his foul and Saviour? O merciful Lord, how dangerous is his state, till he has done it? how many ways may he fall into those heavy hands of his eternal Judge, whereof St. *Paul* conceived horror in the very thinking on it? One little stone falling from the top of the house as he passes by; one slip of his horse as he rides; one assault of an enemy, when he thinks not of him; one poor ague by a surfeit, or other distemper; one sudden mischance of a million that may happen to him, is able to bereave him of this life, and to cast him into those terms of everlasting calamity, from whence the whole world is not able to deliver him. And is not this then a matter to be fear'd? is not this a case to be prevented?

Prov. 28.

O how truly says the holy scripture! *Blessed is the man, who always is fearful, but he that is of an obstinate mind shall fall into evil.*

Our Lord God of his mercy, give us his holy grace to fear him as we should, and to make such account of his judgments and justice as by threatening the same, he would have us to do, for the avoiding of sin. And then we shall not delay the time, but shall resolve our selves to serve him whilst he is content to accept of our service, and to pardon us all our offences, if we would once firmly make this resolution from our heart. For better effectuating whereof, I beseech thee, gentle reader, to peruse with some attention the fifth and seventh chapters of the second part of this book, which give many notable examples of resolutions in others, and no fewer reasons, and arguments against delay and procrastination in thy self.



C H A P. IX.

Another consideration for the further justifying of God's judgments, and manifestation of our grievous offences. Taken from the inestimable Majesty of him whom we offend: and from the innumerable benefits which he has bestowed upon us.

SECT. I. *Of the inestimable Majesty of GOD.*

ALTHO' the most part of Christians by reason of their wicked life, arrive not at that state wherein holy *David* was, when he said to God, *Thy judgments, O Lord, are pleasant unto me;* (as *Psalm 118.* indeed they are all to those that live virtuously, and have the testimony of a good conscience) yet at least, that we may be forced to confess with the same Prophet, *that the judgments of our Lord are true; and justified in themselves:* *Psalm 18.* I have thought expedient to add a reason or two more in this chapter, whereby it may appear how great our offence is, in sinning against God as we do; and how righteous his judgments and justice are against us for the same.

And first of all the Majesty of him against whom we sin is to be consider'd. For most certain it is, as I have noted before, that every offence is so much greater, and more grievous, by how much greater and more noble the person is, against whom it is done, and the party offending more base, and vile. And in this respect almighty God, to terrify us from offending him, names himself oftentimes with certain great, and dreadful titles of Majesty: As to *Abraham,* *Gen. 17.* *I am an omnipotent Lord.* And again to *Isaiab,* *Isaiab 66.* *heaven is my seat, and the earth is my footstool.* And at another time he commanded *Moses* to bear to the people in his name, this ambassage: *Harden not your necks* *Deut. 10.* *any*

The Majesty of God.

any longer, for that your Lord and God is the God of Gods, and the Lord of Lords, a great God, both potent and terrible, who accepts neither person nor bribe.

First then, I say, consider, gentle Christian, of what an infinite majesty he is, whom thou a poor worm of the earth, hath so often, and so contemptibly offended in this life. We see in this world that no man dares to offend openly, or say one word against the Majesty of a temporal prince, at least in his presence, and within his own dominions: But what is the Majesty of all earthly princes put together, if it be compared to the thousandth part of God's incomparable and inestimable Majesty? who with one word made both heaven and earth, and all the creatures therein, and with half a word could annihilate and destroy the same again. Whom all the creatures which he made, both Angels, Heavens, Stars and Elements, do serve at a beck, and dare not once offend. And under whom, as holy *Job* says, do tremble, even they that bear up and sustain the world. The sinner alone emboldens himself against this Majesty, and fears not to offend the same: Whom (*as the holy Catholick Church does profess daily, in her preface to the Blessed Sacrifice) the Angels, the Dominations, the Powers, together with Cherubims and Seraphims, Thrones, and all other multitudes of celestial Spirits, continually praise with hymns of glory.

Job 9.

*See *Cyril, Catech.*

Myst. 5.

Chrys. hom.

26. in *Gen.*

in *fm. Cle.*

1. 8. c. 10.

1 Tim. 6.

Certain declarations of God's Majesty.

Remember then, dear Christian, that every time thou dost commit a capital sin, thou givest, as it were, a blow in the face to this great God of eternal Majesty, whose mansion, as *St. Paul* describes, is in a light inaccessible, such as no man in this world can behold. Whereof *St. John* the Evangelist gives good testimony by his own experience, who, notwithstanding he was an Apostle, and most dearly beloved by his God and Master; yet when Christ appear'd to him after his resurrection, with certain sparkles only of his dreadful glory uttering words of most sweet consolation unto him, he was for all that, so astonish'd and oppress'd with fear, that

that he fell down dead, as himself confesses, till the same Lord and Master vouchsafed to raise him up again. The like trial of this inexplicable Majesty, had *Apoc. 17.* *Moses* the familiar friend and trusty servant of God; who, after many conferences, desiring once in his life to see him whose words he had so often heard, made humble petition for the same: but God answer'd, *That no man might see him and live.* Yet notwithstanding, to satisfy his request, and to shew him in part what a terrible and majestical God he was, he promised *Moses* that he should see some part of his glory; altho', he added, that it was needful he should hide himself in the hole of a rock, and be cover'd with God's own hand for his defence, whilst he, or rather his Angel, as divines do interpret, did pass by in glory. Who being once past, God removed his hand, and suffer'd *Moses* *Exodus 33* to behold the hinder parts only of the Angel, which was notwithstanding most terrible and dreadful. The like or greater terror had the people of *Israel* when they heard God speak with lightnings and thunder from the mount * *Sinai*, and therefore desired *Moses* that he * *Exod. 20.* would speak to them and not God, for they could not endure his speech; but he gave them a memorable answer, that God did this: *Ut terror illius esset in vobis & non peccaretis:* That his fear may be in you, to the end you commit no more sin.

The same Majesty was reveal'd also in some part to *Daniel*, who saw God, as he writes, placed upon a most glorious throne: *His apparel was white as snow; his hair like unto fine wool; his throne a flame of fire, his wheels were kindled; a swift flood of fire came from his face; thousands of thousands ministred to him, and ten thousand hundred thousands did assist him.* All this and much more is recorded in holy scripture, to admonish us thereby what a wonderful Prince of Majesty he is, whom a sinner does offend. Which thing, that just and holy man *Job* considering, and hearing but one word utter'd by his friend, which in his conceit did
favour

Dan. 7.
The view
of God gi-
ven to
Daniel.

Job 26.

favour of presumption against this God, burst forth into these words: *Whom wouldst thou teach? not him that made breath? ---- who stretches out the north wind upon the vacant, and hangs the earth upon nothing? ---- the pillars of heaven tremble and dread at his beck. --- Lo these things are said in part of his ways: and whereas we have heard scarce a little drop of his word, who shall be able to behold the thunder of his greatness?*

A contem-
plation of
God's Ma-
jesty.

Imagine now, my loving brother, that thou seeest before thy face, this great and mighty King sitting in his chair of Majesty, with chariots of fire, unspeakable light, and infinite millions of Angels about him. Imagine further, which is also true, that thou seeest all the creatures in the world stand in his presence, and trembling at his Majesty, and most carefully attending to do that for which he created them; as the heavens to move about, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, to give light and influence, the earth to bring forth her substance; and every other creature diligently to labour for performance of the duty assign'd him. Imagine besides, that thou seeest all these creatures, how big or little soever they be, hang and depend only on the power and virtue of this God; and thereby only stand, move, and consist; and that there passes from God to each creature in the world, yea, to every part that has motion or being in the same, some beam of his virtue; even as from the Sun, we see infinite beams pass into the air. Consider, I say, that no one part of any creature in the world, as the fish in the sea, the grass on the ground, the leaves of trees, or man upon the face of the earth, can grow, move, or consist, without some little stream of virtue, and power derived to it continually from God. So that thou must imagine God to stand as a most glorious, and resplendent sun, in the middle or centre of all things created, and from him to pass forth innumerable beams and streams of virtue, to all the creatures that are either in heaven, earth, the air, or waters, and to every part and particle

How all
creatures
depend on
the Creator

of

of the same ; and that all creatures do depend, upon these beams of his divine virtue, insomuch, that if he should stop, or divert any one of them all, it would destroy, and annihilate presently some creature or other.

This, I say, if thou wilt consider touching the Majesty of God, and the infinite dread that all creatures have of him, except only a sinner (for the devils also do fear him, as St. *James* affirms) thou wilt not marvel *James 2.*

at the severe judgment appointed for those that offend him. For I am sure, that we have more regard not to offend the poorest friend we have in this life, than a wicked man has not to offend Almighty God ; which is an intolerable contempt of so great a Majesty, and such a contempt indeed, as God himself does account to proceed from plain infidelity. For whereas at a

certain time he had declared his own great power, by the mouth of *Jeremiah*, and threaten'd with many punishments, the *Jews* for their wickedness ; they were nothing moved therewith : whereupon he commanded him to return again unto them, and to say these words,

Want of
fear pro-
ceeds from
infidelity.

Hear foolish people which have no heart ; you that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not. And will ye not then fear me ? Will ye not tremble in my sight ? Who have set the sands for a bound to the sea, and have given him an eternal precept which he shall not break ? &c. This people has an incredulous heart, &c. Which is as much as if he had said, that this want of fear in the *Jews*, proceeded from their defect of faith. For if they had believed him to be indeed so powerful, terrible, and full of Majesty, as the holy Scripture sets him down, they would have conceived more fear of offending him. *Jere. 5.*

S E C T. II.

Of the Benefits of Almighty GOD.

BUT now if we join to this contemplation of Majesty, another consideration of his benefits bestowed upon us ; our fault will grow to be far greater.

U

For,

Of the benefits of almighty God.

For, to injure him who has done us good, is a thing most detestable, even in nature itself. And there was never yet so fierce a heart, no not among brute beasts, but that might be won with courtesy and benefits: but much more among rational creatures does beneficence prevail, especially, if it comes from great personages, whose love and friendship declared unto us but in small gifts, does greatly bind the hearts of the receivers to love them again.

Consider then, dear christian, the infinite good turns and benefits which thou hast received at the hands of this great God, thereby to win thee to his love, and that thou mayst leave off to offend and injure him. And altho', no created tongue either of man or Angels, can express one half of these gifts which thou hast received from him, or the value thereof, or the great love and hearty good-will, wherewith he bestow'd the same upon thee: yet to help thy memory, and stir up thy affection to be grateful; I will repeat certain general and principal points thereof, whereunto the rest may be easily referr'd.

The first benefit of creation.

First then call to mind, that he has bestow'd upon you the benefit of your creation; whereby he made you of nothing to the likeness of himself, and appointed you so noble an end, as to serve him in this life, and to reign with him in the life to come: having furnish'd you besides for the better attaining thereof, with the use, service, and subjection of all his other creatures. The greatness of which benefit may partly be conceived, if you do imagine your self to want but any one part of your body; as a leg, an arm, an eye, or the like; and that one should freely, even out of pure good-will and love, supply your want; and give the same unto you. Or if you wanted but any one of your senses, as, that you were deaf, blind, or dumb; and some man should restore your sight, hearing, or speech unto you: how would you esteem this benefit? how much would you profess your self beholden to him for the same? and if the gift of

one

one of these parts only, would seem unto you so singular a benefit; how greatly ought you to esteem the free gift of so many parts together!

Add now hereunto, as I have said, that he has created you to the likeness of himself; to no other end, but to be his honourable servant in this world, and his partner in kingly glory, for all eternity to come; and this he has done to you, being only a piece of earth and clay before: now imagine then, from what sea of love all this proceeded. But yet add further, how he has created all this magnificent world for you, and all the creatures thereof to serve you in your business; the heavens to govern you, and to give you light; the earth, air, and water, to minister infinite variety of creatures for your convenience and sustenance; and of all these has made you lord, and master, to use them for your advantage and benefit in his service, and many also for your consolation, and diversion. Which gifts being so manifold and magnificent as they are, I appeal to your own conscience, how intolerable an ingratitude it is, so greatly to dishonour and injure the giver, as to apply these gifts to his offence, which he bestow'd upon you for his service.

All creatures made for man.

Next after this benefit of creation, ensues the benefit of your redemption, much more excellent, and bountiful than the former; the effect whereof is, that whereas you had lost all those former gifts and benefits, and had moreover made your self guilty by sin, of eternal punishment and damnation (whereunto the Angels were deliver'd for the sin they committed) God chose to redeem you, and not the Angels; and to satisfy for your enormous fault, vouchsafed to deliver his own only Son to the most opprobrious death of the Cross, to pay the ransom and punishment for you with his blood. O Lord God! what heart can possibly conceive the greatness of this benefit? suppose with thy self, gentle Christian, for the better understanding of this benefit, that thou being a poor and abject peasant under the

The second benefit of redemption.

A supposition for expressing the greatness of this benefit.

dominion of some great and mighty emperor, hadst with some of his principal peers and chief nobility, committed grievous crimes against his imperial majesty, thou oftentimes, and they but once; and being both by law convicted, and ready to suffer justice for the same, should the emperor's favour so singularly extend itself in thy behalf, that delivering over those other great princes to execution for their demerits, he conceived a desire to save, and pardon thee; and finding no other convenient means in respect of his justice, how to do the same, should lay the pains, shame, and torments of death due unto thy trespasses, upon his only son and heir of all his empire. Tell me now, if being so abject and contemptible a creature, thou shouldst receive so great a grace of a mighty emperor, who had for fewer offences, even in thy sight, put to death great and glorious princes, as God did those principal Angels, how wonderfully wouldst thou think thy self bound and beholden to him for the same? but further, if this son and heir of this noble monarch, refusing to speak one word for those great princes, should not only accept willingly this dishonour and punishment laid upon him by his father for thy sake; but also should offer himself thereunto, and crave most instantly, that he might by his death make satisfaction for thy offences, and not only this, but should also derive unto thee the participation of his inheritance, making thee of a bond-slave, *heir apparent* to so puissant an emperor, and *coheir to himself*: could thy heart possibly conceive so great a benefit? were it possible, that thy powers of body and soul should not dissolve in the thought of so unspeakable grace? would not thy bowels in a manner burst in sunder with the vehemency of love towards such a benefactor? or can any man of reason ever imagine, that thou wouldst willingly for a thousand worlds offend any more so gracious a Lord? and yet is this benefit of thy redemption, dear brother, by infinite degrees surpassing both this and all other temporal graces that
man's

Ephes. 3.

Rom. 8.

man's wit can imagine, in all and every circumstance that before has been mention'd; and yet it is forgotten, yet it is scarce thought on by many, yet it is little esteem'd, and the giver offended daily by sin, as if this had never pass'd. O singular ingratitude!

In the third place, do come to be consider'd two other benefits namely, vocation and justification. The first whereof, is that whereby God of his infinite depth of mercies, has call'd us from infidelity to the state of Christians, and thereby made us partakers of this our redemption last mention'd, which infidels are not. For altho' he paid the ransom for all in general, yet he has not imparted the benefit thereof to all, but to such only as best it pleased his divine goodness to bestow it upon. After which grace of vocation, and our acceptance thereof, ensued immediately our justification, whereby we were not only set free from all our sins, committed before, and from all pain and punishment due to the same; but also our souls were beautified and enrich'd by the infusion of his holy grace inherent, accompanied with the theological virtues, *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, and with the most precious gifts of the Holy Ghost: and by this grace we were made just and righteous in the sight of God, and entitled to the most blessed inheritance of the kingdom of heaven; the worthiness of which gift, no tongue of man or Angels can express; the same exceeding yet the former two gifts, if I respect my own good, because it would have little avail'd me to have been created and redeem'd if I had not been elected and justified by God's free mercy, and grace, without any precedent merit of mine: whereby is seen that these two benefits are the perfection and complement of the other.

The third and fourth benefit of vocation and justification.

Rom. 8.
2 Cor. 2.

After these do follow a great number of benefits together, appertaining properly to such as are made the children, and true friends of God; every one whereof in it self is of most infinite price, and value. Among which are in the first place to be number'd the holy

The fifth benefit.

Of the Sacraments. Sacraments of Christ's Church, left unto us for our comfort, and preservation after we are enter'd into the bosom thereof. They being nothing else indeed but certain sacred conduits to convey to us the holy grace of God : especially those two, which after our entrance by baptism, do appertain to all men in general, and may be iterated as often as need shall require, or our devotion serve us ; I mean, the holy Sacraments of *Penance*, and of the *Blessed Body and Blood* of our Saviour : whereof the first is to purge our soul from sin as often as she falls ; the second, to feed and comfort the same after she is purged. The first is as a bath made of Christ's own precious blood, to wash and cleanse our wounds therein : the second, as a most comfortable and rich garment, to cover our soul after she is wash'd. In the first, Christ has left with his spouse the Church, all his authority which he has in heaven or earth, to remit sins : in the second, he has left himself, and his own flesh and blood, to be a precious food, wherewith to feed and cherish our souls after our sins are remitted. Which two sovereign Sacraments, to say nothing of the rest, are such singular benefits and heavenly treasures, that no man, but he that has a spiritual understanding can conceive ; and consequently, such as do not esteem the riches of these gifts, or for temporal respects do deprive their souls of the unspeakable benefit thereof, are deeply to be pitied, their losses being everlasting, and irrevocable. But let us go forward.

The sixth benefit of preservation and inspiration.

Besides all these, there yet remains another benefit, which we call the benefit of preservation ; whereby God has kept, and preserved us from infinite dangers, whereinto many others before us have fallen, and into which our selves had fallen in like manner, if God's holy hand had not staid us, and this not only from ordinary snares of eternal damnation ; as adultery, theft, fornication, murther, and other such sins : but from others far more grievous, and dangerous, of schism and heresy, which cut off the very foundation of life

ever-

everlasting, which is true faith. If then we find our selves to have been preserved above others by God's special protection, from these and other like dangers; or if after having fallen into them, we find our selves to have been spared and preserved so long from death, and judgment for the same, whereinto so many thousands of others, who sinned perhaps less than we, have fallen, and are now in endless, and remediless torments: this may make us see and feel in a certain sort this benefit of preservation. Whereunto may be annex'd also the most singular benefit of godly inspirations and admonitions, whereby God has often both knock'd inwardly at the door of our conscience, and warn'd us outwardly, by the dangers of other men; by good books, sermons, exhortations, good company, good example of others, and a thousand most merciful means besides, which at divers times he has used and does use, whereby to gain us and our souls to his eternal kingdom, stirring us up to abandon a vicious life, and betake our selves to his holy and sweet service.

Apoc. 3.

Circum-
stance of
benefits.

All which most rare and excellent benefits, being measured either according to their inestimable value in themselves, or according to the love of the heart from which they proceed; or else if we respect the majesty of the giver, or meanness of the receiver; ought in reason to move us most vehemently to gratitude towards so bountiful a benefactor. And this gratitude should make us resolve to serve him unfeignedly, and to prefer his favour before all worldly or mortal respects whatsoever. Or if we cannot obtain so much of our selves, yet at least, it should make us resolve not to offend him any more by our sins and wickedness, as we daily do.

There is not so fierce or cruel a nature in the world, as I have noted before, but is mollified, allured, and won by benefits. And histories do relate strange examples in this kind, even among brutè beasts; as of the gratitude of lions, dogs, and the like, towards their masters and benefactors. An obstinate sinner is the only one amongst

*Ælian. in
hist. ani-
mal.*

all the savage creatures that are, whom neither benefits can move, nor curtesies mollify, nor promises allure, nor gifts gain to the faithful service of God, his Lord and Master.

The intolerable ingratitude of a sinner towards God.

The greatest sinner that is in the world, if he gives his servant but twenty nobles a year, or his tenant some little farm to live upon; if they should not serve him at a beck, cries out against their ingratitude. But if they should further maliciously seek to offend him, and to join with his professed enemy; how intolerable a matter would this seem in his conceit? and yet himself, dealing much more ungratefully and injuriously with Almighty God, esteems it a matter of small consideration, and easily pardonable. He deals, I say, far more ungratefully with God: for that he has received a thousand fold for one, in respect of all the benefits that one mortal man can give unto another. Seeing, that he has received all in all of God: the bread which he eats, the ground he treads on, the light he beholds, the air he enjoys, and finally whatsoever he possesses, either within or without his body; as also the mind and soul, with all her spiritual endowments; whereof each one is more worth, than ten thousand bodies; if men knew, or would consider what a soul is.

God's complaint of sinners.

Psalms 34.
Jer. 2.

Of this extream ingratitude and injury offer'd by mortal men, God himself is forced to complain in divers places of holy Scripture, as where he says: *They repay'd me evil for good.* And yet much more vehemently in another place, he calls the heavens to witness of this iniquity, crying out: *Obstupefcite cæli super hoc.* O ye heavens be you astonish'd at this. As if he should say by a figurative kind of speech, lose your senses, and go out of your wits, you heavens, with marvel at this incredible iniquity of man towards me. For so he expounded the whole matter more at large in another place: *Audite cæli, & auribus percipe terra, &c.* Harken O ye heavens, and thou earth bend hither thy ears. *I have nourish'd up children,*
and

Isaiah 1.

and have exalted them, and now they do contemn me. What a lamentable complaint is this of Almighty God, against most vile and base worms of the earth? but yet he amplifies this iniquity more vehemently by certain examples and comparisons. *The ox (says he) knows his owner, and the ass knows the manger of his Lord and Master: but yet my people knows not me.---Wo be to this sinful nation, to this people laden with iniquity, to this naughty seed, to wicked children.* What complaint can be more vehement than this? what complaint can be more dreadful than this *wo*, coming from the mouth of him who may punish us at his pleasure?

Ijaiah 1.

Wherefore, dear brother, if thou hast grace, cease to be ungrateful to God any longer: cease to offend him who has by so many ways prevented thee with benefits; cease to render evil for good, hatred for love, contempt for his fatherly affection towards thee. He has done for thee all he can; he has given thee all that thou art; yea, and in a certain manner, all that he is worth himself; and means besides to make thee partaker of all his glory in the world to come, and requires no more from thee for all this, than love and gratitude. O my loving brother, why wilt thou not grant to him this his desire? why wilt thou not do as much to him, as thou wouldst have another man do to thee, for less than the ten thousandth part of these benefits which thou hast received? for, I dare boldly say, if thou hadst given but an alms to a poor man at thy door, thou wouldst think him bound to love thee for it, altho' besides this, there were nothing in thee that greatly might deserve his love. But thy Lord and Master, besides all his gifts bestow'd upon thee, has infinite causes to draw thy love unto him; that is to say, all the causes, which any thing in the world has in it, to purchase love, and infinite more besides. For, if all the perfections of things created both in heaven and in earth that may procure love, were join'd together in one, as all their beauty, all their virtue, all their wisdom, all their sweetness, all their nobility, all their

The conclusion.

Causes of love in God, besides his benefits.

goodness

goodness and other like excellencies: yet thy Lord and Saviour, whom thou by sinning against him, dost condemn, surpasses all these, by infinite and infinite degrees. For he is not only all these things together, but moreover he is beauty it self, virtue it self, wisdom it self, sweetness it self, nobility it self, goodness it self, and the very fountain and spring, from which by little parcels, all these things are derived unto his creatures, as before has been shew'd.

Be ashamed then, Christian, of this thy ingratitude, to so great, so good, and so bountiful a Lord; and resolve for the time to come, to amend thy course of life, and former behaviour towards him. Say at length with the Prophet, having consider'd thy own ingratitude:

Psaln 24. For thy name, O Lord, thou wilt be propitious to my sin for it is much. I know there is nothing which does so much displease thee, or dry up the fountain of thy mercy, or so binds thy hands from doing good, as does ingratitude in the receivers of thy benefits, wherein hitherto I have exceeded all others. But I have done it, O Lord, in my ignorance, not considering thy infinite gifts bestow'd upon me, or what account thou wouldst demand again of the same. But now, seeing thou hast vouchsafed to make me worthy of this special grace also, whereby to see, and know my own error and fault, I hope hereafter, by direction of the same grace, to shew my self a better child towards thee. O my God, I am vanquish'd at length considering the greatness of thy love: and how can I have the heart to offend thee hereafter, seeing thou hast prevented me so many ways with benefits, even when I demanded not the same? can I have hands evermore to sin against thee, who hast given up thy own hands to be nail'd on the cross for me? no, no, it is too great an injury against thee, O Lord, and wo to me that have done it so often heretofore. But by thy holy assistance, I hope not to return to such iniquity for the time to come: which I beseech thee for thy mercies sake, to grant me from thy holy throne of heaven.

C H A P. X.

Of what opinion, we shall be in concerning the matters aforesaid, at the time of our death.

SECT. I. *Of those things which make death terrible.*

THE holy Scriptures teach us, and experience makes it plain, that during the time of this life, the advantages, preferments, and pleasures of the world, possess so strongly the hearts of many men, and hold them chain'd with so forcible enchantments, being forsaken also sometimes upon their just deserts, by the grace of God, that say, and threaten all a man can, and bring against them the whole Scripture from the beginning of *Genesis* to the end of the *Apocalips*, it being all against sin and sinners, yet will it prevail nothing with them, being in that lamentable case, that either they believe not, or mind not whatsoever is said to that purpose, against their settled course, and resolution to the contrary. Of this we have infinite examples in Scripture: as of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, with the cities thereabout, which would not hear the warnings that *Lot* gave them: of *Pharaoh* and his court, whom all that ever *Moses* could do, either by signs or sayings, did not move. And of *Judas* who by no sweet means or sharp threatnings, used by his master, could be brought to change his wicked resolution. But especially the holy Prophets sent by God from time to time, to dissuade the people from their wicked life, and consequently to deliver them from the plagues that hang'd over them, give abundant testimony of this matter, complaining every where of the hardness of sinners hearts, that would not be moved with all the exhortations, preachings, promises, allurements, exclamations, threatnings and thunderings, they could use.

The obduracy of some hearts.

Gen. 19.

Exod. 6,

7, 8, 9.

Mat. 26.

The

The Prophet *Zachary* shall testify for all in this behalf, who says of the people of *Israel* a little before their destruction: *This says the Lord of Hosts, judge justly: whereunto presently he adds, And they would not attend, but turning their backs, went away, and stopp'd their ears, to the end they might not hear; and they did harden their hearts as an adamant-stone, to the end they might not hear the law and the words which God did send in his spirit, by the hands of the former Prophets, and there was great indignation made from the Lord of Hosts.*

This then is, and always has been the way of dissolute worldlings and reprobate people, to harden their hearts like a diamant, against any thing that can be told them for the amendment of their lives, and for the saving of their souls. Whilst they are in health and prosperity, they will not know God, as in another place himself complains. But yet, as the Prophet says, *Psalm 9. God will be known doing judgments: which is at the day of their death, being indeed the next door to their judgment, according as St. Paul testifies, saying, It is appointed for men to die once, and after this the judgment.*

This is the day of God, most terrible, sorrowful, and full of tribulation to the wicked; wherein God will be known to be a righteous God, and to restore to every man, according as he has done either good or evil: or as the Prophet describes it, he will be known then to be a terrible God, and such a one as takes away the spirit of princes; a terrible God to the kings of the earth.

At this day, as there will be a great change in all other things, mirth being turn'd into sorrow, laughing, into weeping, pleasures into pain, stoutness into fear, pride into despair, and the like: so especially, will there be a strange alteration in the judgment and opinion of men. For the wisdom of God (whereof I have spoken in the former chapters, and which, as the Scripture says, is accounted folly by the wise of the world) will then appear in her likeness, and, as it is in very deed, will be confess'd by her greatest

The great change of things at the day of death.

2 Cor. 4.
Psalm 75.

1 Cor. 2.

greatest enemies, to be the only true wisdom; and all carnal wisdom of worldlings to be meer folly as God calls it.

This the holy Scripture sets down clearly, when it describes the speeches and lamentations of the wise men of this world at the last day, concerning the state of holy men, whom they despised in this life. *We senseless, esteem'd their life madness, and their end to be dishonourable: behold how they are now accounted among the children of God, and their lot is with the Saints. We therefore have err'd from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness has not shined to us, and the sun of understanding rose not unto us. We have wearied our selves in the way of iniquity and perdition, and we have walk'd craggy paths; but the way of our Lord we have not known.* Sap. 5.

Hitherto are the words of holy Scripture; whereby we may perceive what a change and alteration of Judgment there will be at the last day, from that which men have now: what confession of folly? what acknowledgment of error? what hearty sorrow for labour lost? what fruitless repentance for having run astray? O that men would ponder and consider attentively these things now! *We have wearied our selves,* say these miserable men, *in the ways of iniquity and perdition, and we have walk'd craggy paths.* What a description is this of lamentable worldlings, who break their brains daily, and weary out themselves in the pursuit of the vanities of this world, for which notwithstanding they suffer, oftentimes more pains, than do the just in purchasing heaven? and when they arrive at the last day at the gate of death, wearied and worn out with trouble and toil, they find that all their labour is lost, and all their vexation taken in vain. For, the little wealth which they have scraped together in this world, and for which they have struggled and drudged so much, will avail them nothing at that instant, but rather increase exceedingly the burthen of their afflictions; which will be manifold, and so grievous, and intolerable

The lamentation of wicked men in the end.

Three causes of great misery in death.

able

able in the wicked, that no created mind can perfectly conceive it, but he that feels them; altho' some small conjecture may be made thereof by these three general ensuing points, whereunto the rest may be referr'd.

The first
point.

Of misery
in death.

The first is the excessive pain which commonly men suffer in the separation of their souls and bodies; which having lived so long together, united, as two dear friends, in joy and pleasure, are now most loth to part, were it not that they are violently forced thereunto. This pain may partly be conceived, if we would go about to drive out life or soul (which soul is all over, and every where throughout our body) but from the least part or member thereof; as surgeons are wont to do, when they will mortify any one place, to make it break: what intolerable pain does a man suffer before this member is dead? what raging grief does he abide? if then the mortifying of one little part only, does so much afflict us; imagine what the violent mortifying of all the parts together will do? for we see that first the soul is driven, by death, to leave the extremities, as the toes, feet, and fingers, then legs and arms; and so consequently, one part dies after another, till life is restrain'd only to the heart, which holds out longest, as the principal part; but yet finally, must be also constrain'd to render it self, tho' with never so much pain and resistance. Which pain, how great and strong it is, may appear by the breaking in pieces the very strings and holds wherewith it is environ'd, thro' the excessive vehemency of this deadly torment.

How pain-
ful is mor-
tifying of
our flesh.

A simili-
tude ex-
pressing
the pain of
death.

Nevertheless, before it comes to this point of yielding, no man can express the cruel conflict that is betwixt death and the soul, and what distresses she suffers in the time of her agony. Imagine, that a prince possess'd a goodly city, in all peace, wealth and pleasure, and in great friendship with all his neighbours round about him, who promised to assist him in all his affairs and exigencies; and that upon a sudden, his mortal enemy should come and besiege this city, and taking
one

one hold after another, one wall after another, one castle after another, should drive this prince into a little tower, and besiege him therein, all his other holds being beaten down, and his men slain in his sight: what fear, anguish, and misery would this afflicted prince be in? how often would he look out at the windows and loop holes of this tower, to see whether his friends and neighbours would come to help him or no? and if he saw them all abandon him, and his cruel enemy even ready to break in upon him: would he not, think you, be in a most piteous plight? even so fares it with our poor soul at the hour of death: the body wherein she reign'd like a princess in all pleasures, whilst it flourish'd, is now batter'd and overthrown by her enemy, which is death: the arms, legs, and other parts wherewith she was fortified, as with walls, during time of health, are now surpris'd, and beaten to the ground, and she is driven to the heart, as to the last refuge, wherein also she is most fiercely assail'd in such sort that she cannot possibly hold out long. Her dearest friends who sooth'd her in time of prosperity, and promised assistance; youth, agility, strength, courage, diet, physick, and other human helps, do now utterly abandon her: the enemy will not be pacified or make any league at all; but night and day assaults this turret wherein she is retired, and which now begins to shake and shiver in pieces. So that she expects hourly when her enemy, in most raging and dreadful manner, will break in upon her.

What think you now, is the state of this afflicted soul? it is no marvel if a wise man becomes a fool, or a stout worldly man, most timorous in this instant of extremity, as we often see they do, so that they can dispose well of nothing at this hour, either towards God or towards the world. The cause whereof is the extremity of pains, that oppress their minds, as *St. Austine* well notes, giving us therewithal a most excellent forewarning of this day, if men were so happy as to follow

An admonition of
St. Austine.

it.

Ser. 48. ad Frat. in E- " When you shall be in your last sickness, dear
mo. circa finem. " brethren, says he, O how hard and painful a thing
 " will it be for you to repent of your faults commit-
 " ted, and of good deeds omitted? and why is this?
 " but because all the intention of your mind will run
 " thither, where all the force of the pain is: many
 " impediments will hinder men at that day; the pain
 " of the body, the fear of death, the sight of children,
 " for whom their fathers will think themselves damn'd;
 " the weeping of the wife, the flattery of the world,
 " the temptations of the devil, the dissimulation of
 " physicians for lucre sake, and the like. And believe
 " thou, O man, who read'st this, that thou shalt
 " quickly prove all this true upon thy self; and there-
 " fore I beseech thee, that thou wilt do penance before
 " thou comest to this last day. Dispose of thy house,
 " and make thy testament whilst thou art whole, whilst
 " thou art wise, whilst thou art thine own man: for
 " if thou tarriest till the last day, thou shalt be led
 " whither thou wouldst not." Hitherto are St. *Austine's*
 words.

The second
 point.
 Of misery
 in death.

The second thing which will make death most terrible, and grievous to a wordly man, is the sudden parting, and that for ever and ever, from all the things which he loved most dearly in this life; as from his riches, possessions, honours, offices, fair buildings, goodly apparel, and rich jewels: as also from wife and children, kindred and friends, and all other earthly delights and commodities, wherewith in this life he thought himself a most happy man. And now to be pluck'd from these upon the sudden, without hope ever to see or use them again; and that oftentimes, when he least doubted of any such matter, must needs be a point of extream great grief; especially if he be in the state which holy *Job* describes, when he says, *The wicked man dies, strong and in health, rich and happy.* What a griping grief, how intolerable a torment will this be? O how true an oracle is that of God, who says:

Job. 35.

O death! how bitter is thy memory to a man that has peace, and rest in his substance and riches? but alas! if the very memory of death is so bitter, how much more death it self, when it will surprize a man having peace in his riches, and it will be said unto him, as Christ reports it was said, to that wealthy man in the Gospel, who had his barns full, and was now come to the highest top of felicity: *Thou fool, even this night thy soul shall be taken from thee; and who shall enjoy the things that thou hast provided.*

Eccl. 41.

Luke 12.

O dear Christian! it is impossible for any mortal tongue to express the doleful state of a worldly man in this instant of death, when nothing of all that he has gathered together with so much labour and toil, and wherein he was wont to repose so great confidence, will now avail him any longer, but rather afflict his soul with the memory thereof, considering that now he must leave all to others, and go himself to give an account for the gathering and using of the same, and that perhaps to his eternal damanation, whilst in the mean time others live merrily and pleasantly upon what he has got; little remembring and less caring for him, that perhaps lies burning in the unquenchable fire for those riches unjustly heap'd up and left to them. This undoubtedly is a most woful and lamentable point, which will bring many a man to great sorrow and anguish of heart at the last day; when all earthly joys must be left, all pleasures and commodities for ever abandon'd. O what a doleful day of parting will this be! what wilt thou say, my friend, at this day, when all thy glory, all thy wealth, all thy pomp, is come to an end? what art thou the better now for having lived in credit with the world, in favour of princes, exalted by all men, fear'd, revered, and honour'd by all sorts; seeing at this instant, all thy jollity, pride, and pomp is at an end, all thy former felicity is arrived now to her everlasting period?

The sorrow of leaving all.

The third
point. Of
misery in
death.

Eccl. 10.

The mi-
serable
change of
the body.

Ysaiah 3.

Thoughts
of him that
lies dying.

But now besides all this, there is a third thing which more than all the rest will make this day of death to be most dreadful and miserable unto a worldly man ; to wit, the consideration of what will become of both his body and soul. And as for his body, it will be no small horror to think on that saying of holy Scripture : *When a man shall die, he shall inherit serpents, and beasts and worms ;* that is, he must be thrown out to be the food of vermin. That body, I mean, which was before so delicately entertain'd with all variety of meats, soft pillows, and beds of down, so finely set forth in apparel and other ornaments, whereupon the wind might not be suffer'd to blow, nor the Sun to shine ; that body, I say, in whose beauty there was so much pride taken, and whereby so many sins were daily committed ; that body, which in this world was accustom'd to all pampering and niceness, and would abide no austerity or discipline at all, must now be forlorn and abandon'd by all men, and left only for a prey to be devour'd by worms. Now the time is come when those words of God must be fulfill'd, which he utter'd by his Prophet against delicate people : *In that day God shall take away the ornaments, --- and for sweet savour there shall be stink, and for a girdle, a rope ; and for curled hair baldness, &c.* All which bodily disgrace and misery, altho' it cannot but breed much sorrow in the heart of him that lies a dying, yet this is nothing in respect of the dreadful thoughts which he will have touching his soul ; to wit, what will become thereof, whither it will go, after its departure out of the body. And then considering that it must appear before the judgment-seat of almighty God, and there receive sentence, either of unspeakable glory, or insupportable pains ; he falls to consider more in particular the danger thereof, by comparing God's justice and threats, set down in holy writ against sinners, with his own life ; he begins to examine the witness, which is his conscience, and finds the same ready to lay infinite accusa-

tions.

tions against him, when he comes to the place of justice.

And now, dear Christian, begins the inexplicable misery of this poor afflicted man ; now does the multitude of sins present themselves before his face, now does he indeed see verified that sentence of sacred Scripture : *In fine hominis denudatio operum* : the works of every man are laid open at his end. Now all God's threats against wicked livers muster before his eyes ; neither is there any one severe saying of holy Writ pronounced against sinners, which now does not offer it self to his mind. Our ghostly enemy, who in this life labour'd to keep all these things from our consideration, thereby the more easily to entertain us in sin and pleasure, will now lay all, and more before our face, amplifying and urging every point to the uttermost, alledging our conscience to every thing for his witness. Which when the poor dying soul cannot deny, she must needs be thereby most vehemently terrified. And so we see it daily comes to pass, even in many virtuous and holy men ; whereof St. *Hierom* reports a very memorable example of blessed St. *Hilarion*, whose soul being greatly affrighted with these considerations and exceeding loath to part from his body, at length after a long conflict took heart and said, " Go forth, my " soul, go forth ; why art thou so sore afraid ? thou " hast served Christ almost threescore and ten years, " and art thou now so fearful to depart ? " to like effect also the holy martyr of God, St. *Cyprian*, tells of a virtuous and godly bishop, who dying in his time, was greatly terrified at the hour of death, notwithstanding he had lived very virtuously ; till at length Christ appearing unto him in the form of a goodly young man, rebuked him in these words : " You are afraid to suffer, and out of this life you will not go ; what then " shall I do to you ? " which words and examples, St. *Austine* did often use to recount talking of this matter, as his scholar *Possidius* records in his life.

Eccl. 11.

A pitiful
plight of
a dying
man.

*Hierom. in
vita Hila.
Abbatis.*

*Cyp. lib. de
Mortal.*

*Possidius in
vita Aug.*

Now then, if good men and Saints are so afraid at this passage, yea such as had served God with all purity of life and perfect zeal, for the space of threescore and ten years together; what will they be who scarce have served him truly one day in all their lives, but rather have spent their years in sin and the vanities of this world? will not these men, think you, be in great extremity at this passage? surely St. *Augustine* describes the same very affectuously in one of his sermons and, according to his custom, gives a notable exhortation upon the same. “ If you will know, dearly beloved, “ says he, with how great fear and pain the soul of “ man does pass from the body; mark diligently what “ I shall say to you: the Angels at that hour will come “ to take thy soul and bring her before the judgment- “ seat of a most dreadful Judge; and then she calling “ to mind her wicked deeds, will begin exceedingly “ to fear and tremble, and would gladly fly and leave “ her deeds behind her, seeking to intreat the Angels, “ and to request but one hour’s space of delay. But “ that will not be granted, and her evil works crying “ out all together, will speak against her, and say: “ *We will not stay behind, nor part from thee, thou “ hast done us, and we are thy works, and therefore “ we will follow thee whither soever thou goest, yea, “ even to the seat of judgment.* This, lo, is the state “ of a sinner’s soul, which parting from his body with “ most horrible fear, goes onwards to judgment laden “ with sins, and with infinite confusion. Contrary- “ wise the just man’s soul goes out of his body with “ great joy and comfort, and the good Angels accom- “ pany her with exaltation. Wherefore, brethren, “ seeing these things are so; fear this terrible hour of “ death now, to the end you may not fear when you “ come to it. Foresee it now, that then you may be “ secure.” Thus far St. *Augustine*.

And because this holy father and learned doctor of Christ’s church, makes mention in this place of good
and

and evil Angels, which are ready at the hour of death to receive the souls of such as depart out of this life: it will not be from our purpose to note, that oftentimes God permits the apparitions of Angels both good and evil, as also of other Saints, to some men lying on their death-beds, for a taste either of comfort or sorrow, touching that which will ensue in the world to come. And this is also a singular privilege, among others belonging to this passage. And concerning the just, I have shew'd before an example of *St. Cyprian* and *St. Augustine*, touching one to whom Christ appear'd at the hour of his death. And *St. Gregory* the Great has divers narrations to that purpose, in the fourth book of his dialogues. As for example sake, of one *Ursinus*, to whom the blessed Apostles *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* appear'd. But as to evil spirits and wicked Angels, who shew'd themselves to divers sinners at the hour of death, and denounced to them their eternal damnation, and horrible torments appointed in hell; we have many and most terrible examples recorded in many grave and ancient writers. As among others, that recorded by *St. Gregory* of one *Chiserius* a rich man, but as full of sin as of wealth, to whom lying on his death-bed, the infernal fiends appear'd in most ugly shapes, shewing how he was now deliver'd into their power, and therefore would never depart from him, till dying he left his soul to be carried by them to eternal torments.

Appearing
of Angels
at the hour
of death.

*Cap. 12. 5.
13, 15, &c*

*Lib. 4.
Dial. cap.
38.*

The like examples does venerable *Bede* recount to have happen'd in our country about his time. And among others of a certain wicked courtier in great favour with king *Coenrede*, to whom lying in the pangs of death, and being now a little recover'd, both the good and evil Angels appear'd visibly; the one laying before him a very small book of his good deeds, the other a great huge volume of his enormous crimes. Which after they had caused him to read; by the permission of the good Angels they seized upon him;

*Lib. 5. hist.
Angl. c. 15.*

*Bede l. 5.
c. 15.*

assigning also to him the certain hour of his departure, according as both himself confess'd openly to all that came to visit him; and as by his horrible, and desperate death, ensuing at the very hour by them appointed, he manifestly confirm'd. He records the like story in the chapter following of one whom he knew himself: and, as both he, *St. Gregory*, and *St. Cyprian* also note, all these and the like visions were permitted for our sakes who yet live, and may profit by the same; and not for their good that died, whom they nothing at all avail'd.

The appli-
cation of all
that has
been said.

Which being so, dear Christian, that is, this passage of death being so terrible, so dangerous, and yet so inevitable as it is: seeing so many men do perish, and are overwhelm'd daily in passing over this perillous gulf, as both holy Scriptures and ancient fathers testify unto us, by examples and records: what man of discretion would not learn to be wise by other mens dangers? or what reasonable creature would not take heed and look about him, being warn'd so manifestly and apparently of his own peril? if thou art a Christian, and dost believe indeed the things which Christian faith does teach thee: then dost thou know and most certainly believe also, that, of what state, age, strength, dignity, or condition soever thou art now; yet must thou thy self, who now dost read this point, in health and mirth, and thinkest the same little appertaining to thee, one of these days, and that perhaps very shortly after the reading hereof, come to prove all these things in thy own person. That is, thou must with sorrow and grief be forced to thy bed; and there after all strugglings with the darts of death, thou must yield thy body which thou lovest now so dearly, to be the bait of worms, and thy soul to the trial of justice, for her deeds in this life,

S E C T. II.

Containing the application of the premises.

AND now it remains, that after all these declarations and discourses, we make some application of the things to our selves, for our own profit, and the direction of our life. Wherefore imagine now my dear brother, and friend, even thou who art so fresh and healthy at this instant, if the ten, twenty, or two years, or perhaps two months or days which thou hast yet to live, were now to end, and that thou wert even at this present stretch'd out upon a bed; wearied, and worn out with dolour and pain; thy worldly friends about thee weeping, and many of them desiring thy goods; the physicians departed with their fees, as having given thee over; and thou lying there alone mute and dumb, in a most pitiful agony, expecting from moment to moment the last stroke of death to be given thee. Tell me in this instant, what will all the pleasures and commodities of the whole earth avail thee? what comfort or ease will it be to thee now to have been a man honour'd in this world, to have been reputed by the people; to have gather'd wealth, to have born office, and enjoy'd the prince's favour, to have left thy children and kindred in abundance; to have trodden down thy enemies; and to have stirr'd much, and born great sway in this life? what pleasure, I say, or benefit would it be to thee, to have been beautiful, to have been gallant in apparel, goodly in personage, glittering in gold? would not all these things rather afflict than avail thee at this instant.

A very profitable consideration upon the premises.

No doubt, but now thou wilt see and thoroughly perceive the vanity of these trifles: thou wilt prove true the saying of the wise man: *Riches will not profit in the day of revenge.* That most excellent demand of holy

The

thought and speech of the soul at our dying day.

- Job*, will oftentimes offer it self unto thy remembrance :
- Job. 21.* *Quid ad eum pertinet de domo sua, post se?* What has a man to do with his house, family, or kindred, after he is gone? what good or comfort will he take thereby? *Who will have pity of thee?* (says God to *Jerusalem*, by his Prophet *Jeremiab*) *or who will be sorrowful for thee?* *or who will go to intreat for thy peace?* *Thou hast abandoned me, says our Lord, thou hast gone backward, and I will stretch out my hand and kill thee.* And yet further by another Prophet, he demands of wicked men, *What will ye do in the day of visitation, and of calamity coming from far?* *To whose help will ye fly?* *where will you leave your glory?* And in another place expressing yet more effectually their state and misery, he says
- Jer. 11.* *They shall cry to Gods unto whom they sacrificed, and they shall not save them in the time of affliction:* That is, they shall cry and call upon their friends, acquaintance, wealth, honour, and other idols, which they served more than God in this life, but they shall receive no help or comfort from them.
- Isaiah 10.* *They shall cry to Gods unto whom they sacrificed, and they shall not save them in the time of affliction:* That is, they shall cry and call upon their friends, acquaintance, wealth, honour, and other idols, which they served more than God in this life, but they shall receive no help or comfort from them.

Alamentable complaint.

O dear Christian, what difference of thought, what change of judgment, what discovery of vanities, will this day bring? thy heart within thee will now begin to reason; lo, here is now an end of my delights and worldly prosperities. All my joys, all my pleasures, all my mirth, all my pastimes are now past. Where are my friends, that were wont to laugh with me; my servants wont to attend me; my children wont to sport the time with me? where are all my coaches and horses, wherewith I was wont to make so great a shew; the bows of people accustom'd to honour me, the croud following me? where are all my dalliances and tricks of love; all my pleasant musick; all my sumptuous buildings; all my costly feasts and banquets? and above all, where are now my dear and sweet friends, who it seem'd would never have forsaken me? but, alas, all are now gone, and have left me here alone to answer the reckoning for all; and none of them will do so much

as to go with me to Judgment, or to speak one word in my behalf. Wo to me, that I did not foresee this day sooner, and so make better provision for it. It is now too late, and I fear I have purchased eternal damnation, for a little pleasure, and have lost unspeakable glory, for a fleeting vanity. O how happy and twice fortunate are they, who lived so, that they need not be afraid of this day? I now see the difference betwixt the ends of good and evil men, and marvel not that the Scriptures say of the one, *The death of Saints is precious*; And of the other *The death of sinners is miserable*. *Psal. 115. Psal. 33.* O that I had lived as virtuously as some others have done: or as I had often inspirations from God to do, how sweet and comfortable would that be to me now in this my last and extream distress.

To these thoughts and rueful speeches, my loving brother, shall your soul be driven at the last hour of your departure, if now you prevent it not by wisdom, and diligence. For which prevention, the spirit of God has reveal'd to us two principal means: the first whereof is, the diligent exercise of good works in this life, to which Christ himself assures a good and happy passage at our death. For so he pronounced plainly by a voice from heaven to his dear Apostle St. John: *They shall now rest, from their labour; because their works follow them*. *Apoc. 14.* And holy David the Prophet expresses the manner of a good man's departure more in particular, saying, God shall help and assist him upon the bed of his sorrow; that is, upon his death-bed, or bed of his last departure, which to a worldly man may rightly be call'd the bed of sorrow, seeing it is nothing else but a collection and heap of all sorrows together. Which sorrows in a Christian can no way be better prevented than by doing good works in this life, which at his death he may be sure will not fail him. For so St. Paul assures us when he says, *God is not unjust, that he should forget your work and love, which you have shew'd in his name, and have, and do minister to his Saints*. *Heb. 6.* And our
desire

An excellent assurance given by St. Paul for reward of good works.

desire is, that every one of you should continue the same solicitude (of ministering to Saints for supplying their necessities) *to the fulness of hope, even to the end.* So St. Paul: which is as much as to say, that at your ending day you may be full of hope, in respect of the alms and other good works, which you have done to the servants of God, for his sake, in your life-time, which his divine Majesty holds himself as much bound to reward fully at your last day, as if he might be accounted unjust, if he did it not. What more excellent assurance can be given than this? what more comfortable exhortation, and persuasion to do good works in a man's health, than this of the Apostle, to obtain thereby *the fulness of hope*, in the hour of our death? that is to say, that our soul in that dreadful passage will be void of fear, and replenish'd with all kind of hope, confidence, and comfort from God himself.

The force and virtues of alms-deeds.

Luke 11.

Therefore the first and chief preparation to find comfort at our death, is to be full of good works in our life, especially alms-deeds, and works of charity, whereof there would be no end, if we would begin to treat and declare what both holy Scripture and the spirit of God, and his Saints and servants, have utter'd in commendation thereof. The general sentence of Christ our Saviour is most admirable, being as it is universal, when having spoken of most grievous sins in the Scribes and Pharisees, to wit, of rapine and iniquity, from which he exhorted them to cleanse their minds: yet he adds presently this other general remedy: *But yet that remains, give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you.* Of what a wonderful force is this, that it could cleanse even the Scribes and Pharisees of rapine and iniquity, yea, and of all other offences! but yet the spirit of God in the Prophet *Daniel* went somewhat further: for he offer'd not only to Scribes and Pharisees that believed in God to be cleansed this way; but even to king *Nabuchodonozor* himself, that was a meer *Pagan* and *Gentile*, exhorting him to redeem his sins with alms.

Hear

Hear my counsel, O king (says he) and redeem thy sins Dan. 4. with alms-deeds, and thy iniquities with works of mercy towards the poor, for perhaps God will pardon thy sins by this means.

This was the Prophet's counsel, and it was good counsel; for by this means God had mercy upon him indeed, before his death. And if God respects so much these charitable deeds, even in heathens and unbelieving people (according to what we read also in the *Acts of Acts 10. the Apostles*, that the alms-deeds of *Cornelius*, a centurion, were accepted by almighty God, and rewarded by sending *St. Peter* to him, to convert him to the Christian faith) how much more will God accept and reward the same in Christians, especially at their death, when they have most need of his heavenly comfort? The spirit of God writes of a valiant woman, that had a large hand in giving alms: *She has open'd her hands to Prov. 33. the needy, and stretch'd out her palms to the poor.* But what reward ensues? twenty blessings truly, which you may read in the text, and one of the greatest is: *And she shall laugh in the last day*; that is to say, when others will weep and be afflicted at the day of death, then will she rejoice and be in mirth.

Holy *St. Chrysostom* was wont to make many earnest speeches about this matter to his people, of *Constantinople*, in his ordinary sermons; and amongst other things he was wont to say: that a great alms-giver The saying of St. Chrysostom about alms-deeds. could not possibly be damn'd, nor have an evil death. The reason is, because he had so many lords and great courtiers of heaven to pray and be intercessors for him (which are the poor by Christ's own interpretation, when he says, *That poor men are blessed, for that theirs is the kingdom of heaven*) that it is impossible for God not to hear them, when they join together to obtain pardon for any man; as they always do for a great alms-giver. To which effect there is a story in the book call'd *Pratum spirituale*, of a certain woman that cried vengeance at God's hands many days together Mat. 6. Zeno the emperor defended by alms-deeds. See Pratum spirituale. cap. 275. against

against *Zeno* the emperor, for taking away her daughter ; which *Zeno* being a man that gave great and large alms, it was answer'd to the woman in a vision, that those his many alms-deeds did defend him against her demand of vengeance.

A comfortable example of the death of a repentant soldier.

We read also of a certain captain, who having lived extremely wicked in all kind of looseness, and liberty of a soldiers life, fell sick at last even unto death, and being extremely afraid and vex'd for divers days together, with the consciousness of so many hainous sins committed all the time of his life, at last, falling into a great trance, there came into his mind, and represented it self as it were before his eyes, with infinite comfort, that he had once in the sacking of a certain city, saved a young virgin from ravishing by another soldier ; in respect of which act (it being the only good thing that he could remember done by him throughout his life) it seem'd that almighty God would have mercy upon him, and give him true repentance, and pardon for his sins ; which thought, as it did comfort him infinitely in that afflicted state of his, so it fell out also to be true very soon after, for feeling by this means an exceeding tenderness of heart towards sorrow for his said sins, he broke forth into many tears, confess'd himself according to the use of Christ's Catholick Church, received the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist, and Extreme-Unction, and so died most happily repentant for his sins, and full of hope, comfort, and consolation from almighty God for his exceeding mercies towards him.

A notable parable of St. *John Damascen* in vita Mar.

This then is the force and virtue of this singular patronage of good works, to help and assist us at our death, to which effect, St. *John Damascen* has that excellent parable of the steward that had three sworn friends to help him at all exigences ; but when at length he fell into disgrace, and wrathful offence of his king, and was call'd in haste to appear before him, and give up his accounts ; he being greatly terrified with this sudden

sudden

sudden change, ran up and down as a man amazed, to seek out his three friends to go with him, and to be surety for him if need required; but when he came to the first, he was answer'd by him, that the king being a terrible man, he durst not appear before him, only he said, seeing the steward's apparel was not good, he would lend him some better apparel to appear before him with his credit. Going therefore to the second friend, he denied in like manner to go with him to the king's presence, or to speak for him, but only because he was somewhat handsomly apparell'd, he would accompany him, for honours sake, unto the palace-gate, and there would leave him.

The poor man being thus abandon'd by his first two friends, he ran with a sorrowful heart to the third, who hearing his cause, bid him be of good cheer, for he would go with him, and enter before the king, intreat and plead for him, and if need were, be surety also for his debts; and so he did, and the afflicted steward was deliver'd thereby, and restored to the king's favour again. This is the parable: and the first two faint and false friends are the world, and our carnal kindred and worldly friends, both forsaking us at our death; the former lending us only a fair cloth or two to be laid over the bier, wherein we are carried; and the second accompanying us only, for honours sake, unto the grave, or pit, where we must enter. But the third friend, which are our good works and alms-deeds, is content to enter with us to the presence of the prince himself, pleads and intreats for us, and so pacifies his wrath, that by his earnest and effectual intercession we are restored to his favour and friendship again. This then is the first prevention and preparation for Christian men to assure to themselves a comfortable dying-day.

The explanation of the parable.

The second means to prevent the same is, that we premeditate, and think often of this passage of death before-hand, if we would not fear the same, and

The second way of preventing the terror of death.

be terrified therewith when it comes. For as philosophers say, *Ab assuetis non fit passio*: things whereunto we are accustom'd do not move, or trouble us much: as for example, a horse accustom'd to the noise and terror of war, and to hearing the beating of drums, and to see the discharging of artillery, starts not thereat, as other horses will do, to whom the matter is strange and new: and so he that acquaints himself before with the ghastly visage of death, by daily meditation thereof, is less subject to the fear and terror of the thing it self when it comes; for he has made all his accounts before-hand, as holy *Job* had, when he said of himself, all the days of my life do I attend the coming of my change, or departure from this world. So he pass'd every day in the thought of death; whose example all holy men have commonly follow'd and do at this day, and that with great reason, tho' careless men say, that this meditation will hinder their mirth, breed melancholy and such other things. For if this bitter cup cannot pass, but that all must drink thereof, then it is wisdom and providence to look upon it, and think thereof well before-hand.

Job 14.

An example shewing the utility of frequent meditation of death.

If there were a certain river to be pass'd that no man could avoid, and if each man and woman in their turns must pass the same, and that perforce and in haste when they are call'd unto it, if most people were known to perish and be drown'd in that passage; were it not wisdom for a man to go and view the place of passage before his turn comes to enter, and to be forced to take his chance therein? were it not good that he should go as near the river as he could to behold the entrance, examine the ford, see and contemplate the passage of others, as well such as have miscarried, as those that have happily escaped and arrived safely on the other side? were not all this wisdom, think you, and most necessary and profitable providence? And how then in this most dangerous passage of death, through which all must pass, and do daily, and many

many are everlastingly cast away by passing: how, I say, are worldly men so foolishly negligent, and delicate, that not to hinder their mirth, they will not so much as think of it, nor trouble their minds with thoughts of any such matter, or take any notice thereof at all, until the very moment that themselves must pass perforce? oh sad deceit! oh lamentable folly and negligence! how many thousands might be saved both body and soul, who perish in this passage, if they would vouchsafe but to view and look upon it before-hand.

Great folly of careless worldly men.

We read of St. *Hierom* that he was wont to say, that no day pass'd him, nay, no hour, whether he were eating, drinking, studying, praying, rising, or going to sleep, but he thought of this passage, and therefore in his picture there is commonly painted a crucifix, with a death's-head by it, as a double memorial of our dying-day; whereto some do add an hour glass, for to measure the time how it runs towards this passage. And altho' some careless wanton people in the world will laugh at this diligence (which many servants of God do use also at this day) yet they will find to their cost, how profitable an exercise this was and is. For certainly no one thing under heaven is more forcible and potent to hold a man in good order, and to repress the fumes and furies of his rebellious passions and disordinate appetites in this life than his often remembring death; because it strikes down the very top-sails of vanity at one blow. And if princes in their greatness of fortune, and worldly men amidst their prosperities, in their banquetings, feasting, marriages, masques, and the like, would admit but one serious thought of this last passage, and what they will be, and feel therein; it would hold them within such limits of temperate proceedings, that they would, according to our *English* proverb, *Be both merry and wise together*, and feast without offending God.

The example of St. *Hierom*, with his death's-head.

And to say a word or two more of the death's-head, or dead man's skull, left before with St. *Hierom*; true

A contemplation about the dead man's skull.

it is, that it seems an ugly and loathsome sight to such as now flourish in flesh, and have not yet their bones discover'd and dried up, nor their faces disfigured, as that skull has ; but to spiritual wise men it seems a more pleasant sight than the other, and a much more true and necessary spectacle : for it makes us see much more sincerely what we are, and what we shall be shortly. For which cause many devout people, and some princes also, use to keep the same by them in their chambers, that they may be often admonish'd, thereby to hold continually in their mind and meditations, the thing which it represents, especially by help of these words which commonly are written about the said skull : *Sum quod eris, fueramque quod es.* I am that which thou shalt be, and have been that which thou art now. That is to say, I have been as strong and merry, as thou art at this present : I have been as proud and vain of my stature, beauty, agility, and nimbleness, and other qualities, and ornaments of my body, as thou ever hast been, that now lookest upon me with disdain, and contempt. And shortly thou shalt be that which I am now ; that is to say, a dried skull, bones without flesh, mouth without tongue, ear-holes without hearing, eye-pits without sight, brows without brain, and head without sense or feeling. The soul that was wont to quicken me, and give life to all, has long ago abandon'd me, and left me to the food of worms ; and so shalt thou be shortly also, notwithstanding all thy care and diligence in dressing, decking, and preserving thy self : neither do thou think that the time will be long, for it flies and fleets with the wind, nor stays for any occasion whatsoever.

The speech
of a death's-
head to the
beholder.

Remember then St. *Hierom's* hour-glass that runs continually ; and for more assurance, take thy self by the wrist, and feel the beating of thy own pulse, which is the clock or dial of thy heart, and consider that every blow and stroke thereof, is a stroke to the shortning of thy life, and the ending of thy pulse is the end of
thy

thy days: for when the pulse stands still, and beats no more, thy soul flies, and then thou shalt be as I am now. And this is the speech of the death's-head to him that beholds it; which, imagine gentle reader, to be thy self, and thereby seek to profit by other mens examples that have come to that state before: which if thou wouldst seriously do, and enter into consideration and contemplation thereof, thou wouldst, no doubt, reap such singular advantage thereby, that the same might serve thee for a light to guide and direct the residue of that little time which thou hast in this world to enjoy, in the true path and course of a virtuous life and conversation.

And this may serve for this place, to shew the great and many advantages which the frequent meditation, and serious consideration of this our last passage may bring unto men: for that indeed it lays truly before us what a man is, how frail and miserable a creature, how fond and vain in the haughtiness of his projects, while he is in health and prosperity. It is the true glass that represents a man as he is indeed: other glasses are false and counterfeit, and full of fraud in their representations, but this is sincere and simple, and beguiles no man. For which cause holy fathers that labour to make us truly know our selves, and thereby repress some part of the swelling pride and insolence of our flesh and worldly thoughts, principally persuade us to look often upon this glass; and above all other meditations, to make this our frequent and ordinary meditation, from which divers and sundry most excellent effects and fruits will ensue, whereof I shall show some few in this place, and therewithal make an end of this chapter, and of this whole matter.

The first fruit is, that we shall hereby stand in continual awe and expectation of death, as you have heard holy *Job* affirm of himself before, and king *David* also confess'd, *That the fear of death was fallen upon him.* Out of which fear, does proceed a second effect

How profitable it is to think upon death

of great weight in man's life, to wit, solicitude; which the blessed man *Job* had by his continual meditation: for he says of himself, that by consideration he was made solicitous with fear: and thereupon he adds further, *That he doubted all his works.* In which case, *St. Paul* also signifies himself to be, when he exhorts all men to be careful to do good works whilst they have time; and for that this time is but short, so to use this present world as though they used it not. The third effect that follows in the meditation of death, is the understanding of our own baseness, and vileness, whereunto *St. Paul* exhorted the *Corinthians* when he said unto them, except you be reprobates, you know your selves. For he that thinks often upon the state of a dead man, will easily confess with *St. James*, *That our life is a vapour*: and with *Isaiah*, *that all the glory of man is but as a flower of the field.* And will finally say to himself, with the wise man; why does earth and dust wax proud, and take so much upon it?

These are the most excellent effects that do ensue, by frequent meditation and consideration of death. But besides these, there follows also a fourth, which is the casting from us all the superfluous worldly cares, which are commonly in them that consider not their end; according as the wise man warns us, when he says: *God has given (or permitted) to the sinners afflictions and superfluous care, to scrape and gather together, to leave it to such as to God it shall best please.* And out of this effect, is engender'd by little and little, and by degrees, another more high and excellent thing, call'd the contempt of creatures, for the love of their Creator, whereunto *St. Paul* was arrived when he wrote those words: *I do esteem all things as dung, for the gaining of Christ.* And from this proceeds another (which is the sixth and last) call'd the contempt, or rather the love and desire of death. Which *St. Paul* also had attain'd unto, when he said of himself: *I do desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* And the holy Prophet *David*,

Job. 23.
Job. 9.

Gal. 6.
1 Cor. 6.

2 Cor. 13.

Jam. 4.
Isa. 40.

Ecc. 10.

Ecc. 2.

Phil. 3.

Phil. 1.

David, who says, That the fear of death was fallen upon him; came at length to cry out, my soul does thirst after God, who is the living fountain; when shall I come and appear before the face of God? so that from the fear of death, which is the first effect that springs from the remembrance and meditation thereof, he was come now to the love and most earnest desire of the same, which is the highest degree of comfort, and the most supreme felicity that Saints do arrive at in this life.

Psalms 54.

Psalms 41.

The highest felicity of Saints in this life.

The conclusion of all.

Endeavour then, dear Christian brother, by frequent and diligent meditation of this passage, to attain to this felicity, or at least, to some part or degree thereof. Fear death now that thou mayst not fear it then. For as God by his holy spirit assures us: *The fear of our Lord shall delight the heart, and shall give joy, gladness in the length of days. With him that fears our Lord it shall be well in the latter end, and in the day of his death he shall be blessed.*

Eccles. 1.

C H A P. XI.

Of the great and severe pains and punishments, temporal for them that will be saved, eternal for the damn'd, appointed by God for sinners after this life.

SECT. I. *Of God's punishments in general.*

AMONGST all other means which almighty God uses towards the children of man in this life, to move and induce them to the resolution, whereof I treat, the strongest and most forcible, considering human frailty, is the consideration of punishments prepared by him for rebellious sinners and transgressors of his commandments. Wherefore he uses this motive often, as may appear by all the Pro-

The force
of fear.

Jon. 1.

Mat. 12.

Mat. 3.

Luk. 3.

Of God's
punish-
ments in
general.

2. Cor. 5.

Rom. 2.

*In serm. de
primordiis,
mediis, &
novissimis
nostris.*

phets, who do almost nothing else but thunder out and threaten plagues and destruction to offenders. And this has oftentimes prevail'd more than any other that could be used, by reason of the natural love which we bear towards our selves; and consequently the natural fear which we have of our own danger. So we read that nothing could move the *Ninivites* so much, as the fore-telling them of their imminent destruction. And *St. John Baptist*, altho' he came in a simple and contemptible manner: yet preaching unto the people the terrour of vengeance to come, and that the ax was now put unto the tree, to cut down for the fire, all such as repented not: he moved the very publicans, and soldiers to fear, in such sort, that they came unto him upon his terrible ambassage, and asked what they should do, to avoid these punishments.

For which cause having consider'd in the former chapter, death, and God's severe Judgment, wherein every man is to receive according to his works in this life: it follows, that we consider also the punishments which are appointed for them that will be found faulty in that day of account, hereby at least; if no other consideration will serve, to induce Christians to this resolution of serving God. For as I have noted before, if every man has naturally a love of himself, and desires to conserve his own ease: then should he also fear the danger of falling into misery and calamity. This *St. Bernard* expresses very excellently, according to his custom. " O man, says he, if thou hast left all
" shame, which appertains to so noble a creature as
" thou art, if thou feel'st no sorrow, as carnal men do
" not; yet lose not fear also, which is found even in
" brute and savage beasts. We use to load an ass, and
" to weary him out with labour, and he cares not,
" because he is an ass: but if thou wouldst thrust
" him into the fire, or sling him into a ditch, he
" would avoid it as much as he could, because
" he loves life and fears death. Fear thou then, and

" be

“ be not more insensible than a brute beast : fear death,
 “ fear judgment, fear hell. This fear is call’d the
 “ beginning of wisdom, and not shame and sorrow ;
 “ because the spirit of fear is more potent to resist sin,
 “ than the spirit of shame and sorrow. Wherefore it
 “ is said, *Remember the end, and thou shalt never sin* ;
 “ that is, remember the final punishments appointed
 “ for sin, after this life.” Thus far holy St. Bernard.

First therefore to speak in general of the punishments reserved in the life to come : if the Scriptures did not declare in particular their greatness unto us, yet are there many reasons to persuade us that they are most severe, grievous and intolerable. For first, as God is a God in all his works, that is to say, great, wonderful, and terrible ; so especially he shews the same in his punishments, when he takes upon him to punish, being call’d for that cause in holy Scripture, both *God of Justice*, and *God of Revenge*. And the Prophet David does so much exaggerate the terrors of God’s punishments, that he does not only say twice to God in one *Psalms* ; *In ira tuâ defecimus* : we cannot subsist or stand in thy wrath ; but adds also this exaggerative interrogation ; *Who knows the power of thy wrath ? or for fear to number thy wrath ?* Wherefore seeing all his other works are so majestic and exceeding our capacities, as we experience daily, we may likewise gather, that in punishing he is no less wonderful. God himself teaches us to reason in this manner, when he says, *Me then will you not fear, says our Lord, and at my presence will you not be sorry ? who have set the sand a limit for the sea, an everlasting precept that shall not pass, and they shall be moved and shall not prevail : and the waves thereof shall swell, and shall not pass over it.* As who would say, if I be wonderful and pass your imagination in these works of the sea, and others of this world, which you behold daily ; you have just cause to fear me, considering that my punishments are like to be correspondent to the greatness of my other actions.

Three con-
 jectures of
 the great-
 nels of pu-
 nishments.

Psalms 89.

His ma-
 jesty.

Jerem. 5.

God's
mercy.

Another conjecture of the great and severe justice of God in punishing, may be the consideration of his infinite and unspeakable mercy ; which as it is the very nature itself of God, and consequently without end or measure as his Godhead is ; so is also his justice. And these two are the two arms, as it were, of his divine majesty embracing and kissing one the other, as the Scripture says. And therefore as, if we had the measure of a man's arm, we might easily conjecture the length of the other ; so beholding daily the wonderful examples of God's infinite mercy towards them that repent, we may thereby conceive the severity of his justice towards such as he reserves to punishment in the life to come, and whom, for that cause he calls in holy Writ, *Vasa furoris* ; that is, vessels of fury, whereon to exercise the rage of his dreadful and most terrible indignation.

Psalms 84.

Isaiah 13.

God's pa-
tience,

A third consideration to induce us to the understanding of the greatness of God's punishments in general, may be his marvellous patience, and long suffering of sinners in this life. So for example, he suffers divers men from sin to sin, from day to day, from year to year, and from age to age, to live continually in that contempt of his majesty, and transgression of his commandments ; rejecting all persuasion, allurements, inspirations, and other means of grace and favour that his merciful goodness offers for their amendment : and what man in the world could suffer this ? or what mortal heart is able to shew such patience ? we say of men, that patience abused turns it self into rage ; but God's patience we see daily in this world, not only abused, and exasperated by the perseverance of sinners in their sins, but neglected and contemn'd also. Wherefore if this should not be requited with severity of punishment, in the world to come, it might seem to be against the law of justice and equity. *St. Paul* touches this reason in his epistle to the *Romans*, where he says, *Dost thou contemn the riches of his goodness and patience, not know-*
ing

Rom. 2.

ing that the benignity of God brings thee to penance ? but according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou heapest to thy self wrath, in the day of wrath and of the revelation of the just judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his works. In which sentence St. Paul uses the phrase of *heaping wrath or vengeance*, to signify thereby, that as the covetous man does lay up money daily to make his heap increase, so the unrepentant sinner does heap sin upon sin : and God on the contrary side heaps vengeance on vengeance, until his measure be full, to restore in the end, *measure against measure*, as the Prophet says, and to pay us, as another Prophet says, *according to their works, and according to the deeds of their hands.* *Isaiah 27.*
Jere. 25.

This was the meaning of almighty God, when he said to *Abraham*, *That the iniquities of the Amorreans were not yet compleat :* as also in the revelations unto St. *John Evangelist*, when he used this conclusion of that book : *He that hurts, let him hurt yet : and he that is filthy, let him be filthy yet : --- Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his deeds.* By which words God signifies, that his forbearance, and toleration with sinner's in this life, is a preparation of his greater severity in the life to come : which the Prophet *David* insinuates in like manner, when talking of a careless sinner, he says, *But our Lord shall scorn him : because he foresees that his day shall come.* By which day, no doubt, is to be understood the day of account and punishment after this life, for so does God more at large declare himself in another place, in these words : *And thou son of man, thus says our Lord God. --- Now an end upon thee, and I will send my fury upon thee : and I will judge thee according to thy ways : and I will lay against thee all thy abominations. And upon thee my eye shall not spare, and I will not have mercy : but I will lay thy ways upon thee, and thy abominations shall be in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. --- Now straight-*

way I pour out my wrath upon thee, and I will accomplish my fury in thee, and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and I will lay upon thee all thy wicked deeds. And my eye shall not spare, neither will I have mercy : but I will lay thy ways upon thee, and thy abominations shall be in the midst of thee : and you shall know that I am the Lord that strike. Hitherto is the speech of almighty God, deliver'd by the mouth of his holy prophet Ezekiel.

S E C T. II.

Of temporal punishments after this life.

SEEING then we now understand in general, that the punishments of God in the life to come, will certainly be great and severe, upon all such as fall into them, (for which cause St. Paul affirms, *that it is horrible to fall into the hands of the living God*) let us consider more particularly what manner of pains and punishments they will be. For better conceiving whereof, it is to be noted, that there are two sorts of sinners in this world : the one, who die in the guilt of mortal sin ; and in the disfavour and hatred of almighty God, of whom it is said, *Their part shall be in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* And Christ in the Gospel says of the same men : God shall burn these kind of men which are but chaff, with unquenchable fire. The other, who have the guilt of their sin pardon'd by their repentance in this life, but yet have not made that temporal satisfaction to God's justice, nor are so thoroughly purged in this world, as to pass to heaven without punishment : of whom it is written by St. Paul : *He shall suffer detriment, but himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.* Upon which words the holy father St. Austine writes thus : Because St. Paul says, that these men shall be " saved by fire, therefore this fire is contemn'd ; but " surely, tho' they shall be saved by it, yet this fire " is

Heb. 10.

Apo. 21.

Mat. 3.

1 Cor. 3.

Aug. in
Psalm 37.

“ is more grievous than whatsoever a man can suffer
 “ in this life; altho’, you know how great and intoler-
 “ able things men have, or may suffer.” So he. And
 the same St. *Austine* in another place expounds yet fur-
 ther the words of the same Apostle in this manner.
 “ They who have done things worthy of temporal pu- *Hom. 16.*
 “ nishment, of whom the Apostle says; They shall be *ex 50.*
 “ saved by fire, must pass through a fiery river, and most *hom.*
 “ horrible shallows of burning flames, signified by the *1 Cor. 3.*
 “ Prophet, when he says, And a flood of fire went *Dan. 7.*
 “ before him; and look how much matter there is
 “ left in their sins, so long must they stick in passing
 “ through; how much the fault requires, so much
 “ shall the punishment of this fire revenge.” And be-
 cause the word of God does compare the soul of a
 sinner to a pot of brass, saying, “ Put the pot empty
 “ upon the coals, until the rust be melted off, there-
 “ fore in this fire, all idle speeches, all filthy thoughts,
 “ all light sins will boil out and consume, which by a
 “ short way might have been separated from the soul
 “ in this life, by alms, and tears.” Hitherto St. *Austine*.

And the same holy father in another place has yet *Lib. de*
 further these words. “ If a sinner by his repentance *vera.*
 “ and conversion escape death and obtain life; yet for *falsa pœni-*
 “ all that I cannot promise him, that he will escape *tentia.*
 “ all pain and punishment. For he that deferr’d the *cap. 18.*
 “ fruit of repentance until the next life must be per-
 “ fected in purgatory in fire; and this fire, I tell you,
 “ tho’ it be not everlasting, yet it is extremely grie-
 “ vous; for it does far exceed all pains that man can
 “ suffer in this life, Never was there found out yet
 “ so great a pain in flesh, as that is, tho’ Martyrs
 “ have suffer’d strange torments, and many malefactors
 “ have suffer’d exceeding great punishments and tor-
 “ ments for their evil facts.”

To the like effect does St. *Gregory* write of the seve- *Gregor. in*
 rity of this punishment, expounding those words of *Psal. ter-*
David: O Lord rebuke me not in thy fury, nor correct *tium pœni-*
me *Psal. 27.*

The grievousness of pains in the purging fire.

me in thy wrath. “ This is as if he said, says St. Gregory, I know that after this life, some must be cleansed by purging fire, and others must receive sentence of eternal damnation. But because I esteem that purging by fire, tho’ it be transitory, to be more intolerable, than all the tribulation which in this life can be suffer’d: therefore, I do not only desire not to be rebuked in the fury of eternal damnation; but also I greatly fear to be purged in the wrath of transitory correction.” Thus far St. Gregory. And I might add a hundred such like other sayings out of the ancient holy fathers, touching the extream severity of this purging fire after death, and the great fear which they had thereof. But what is already said may be sufficient to give admonition to Catholicks, that agree with these Saints in belief of this doctrine, to look more carefully to themselves, to avoid the rigour of this fire, especially by these two principal means of alms-deeds and tears, whereunto St. Augustine most earnestly exhorts them in the place before alledged; where he also makes this discourse: “ You know, says he, how great pains wicked men have, or may suffer in this life, and yet they have suffer’d no greater than good men may also suffer, and have suffer’d. For whatsoever malefactors, thieves, adulterers, murderers, wicked and sacrilegious people have suffer’d by laws: no less grievous have Martyrs suffer’d for the confession of Christ, and both these are much more easy than the purging fire before mention’d: this fire is more grievous than whatsoever a man can suffer in this life. --- How diligently then ought we to do that little which God commands us, to avoid that fire?” these were the sentiments the learned St. Augustine had in these affairs.

Augustin.
in Psal. 37.

And truly it is very strange and wonderful to consider, how great fear, and terror holy men of ancient times conceived at the very thought of this fire; and how slenderly we pass the same over now a-days, having infinite

infinite more cause to fear than they had. Among others, that blessed devout man *St. Bernard*, who led so exemplar, and strict a life, as the world knows, entering into contemplation of this matter, broke forth into these ensuing words: “ O would to God some man “ would now before-hand provide for my head abundance of water, and to my eyes a fountain of tears: “ for perhaps the burning fire would take no hold, “ where running tears had cleansed before.” And again in another place; “ I tremble and shake for fear of “ falling into God’s hands. I would gladly present my “ self before his face already judged by my self, and “ not to be judged then by him. Therefore, I will “ make a reckoning whilst I am here, both of my “ good deeds and of my bad. My evil deeds shall be “ corrected with better works; they shall be water’d “ with tears; they shall be punish’d by fasting; they “ shall be amended by sharp disciplines. I will rip up “ the very bottom of my ways and works, to the end “ he may find nothing untried at that day, or not “ fully discuss’d to his hands. And then I hope in his “ mercy, that as he has promised, he will not judge “ the same faults again.” Hitherto are the words of *St. Bernard*. And it is no marvel that his fear and solicitude, to avoid these temporal punishments in the next life, was so great: seeing that in another work of his, he has these words; “ Know ye that what sins “ soever have been neglected by us here in this life, “ they will be punish’d afterwards a hundred-fold in “ the purging places of the life to come.”

*Bernard
ser. de sex
tribulationi-
bus, 16.
& 55. in
Can.*

*Cap. 16.
& 55. in
Can.*

*Bern. ser.
de obitu
Hamberti.*

The like great fear utter’d holy *St. Ambrose* in these words: “ O Lord, if thou reserve any thing in me to “ be revenged in the next life; yet I humbly beseech “ thee that thou givest me not up to the power of “ wicked spirits, whilst thou wipest away my sins by “ the pains of Purgatory.” And again in another place; “ I shall be search’d, and examined as lead, in “ this fire, and I must burn till all the lead is melted “ away.

*Ambros.
Præcat.
preparat.
2. Ad
Messam.*

*Serm. 20.
in Psalm
118.*

i Cor. 3.

“ away. And if then there be found no silver-metal
 “ in me; wo be to me, for I must be thrust down
 “ to the profoundest part of hell, or else wholly wasted
 “ away, as straw in the fire. But if any gold or silver
 “ be found in me, not thro’ my works, but by grace,
 “ and Christ’s mercy, and thro’ the ministry of my
 “ priest-hood, I shall once say, surely they that trust
 “ in thee shall never be confounded.”

How much
 the holy
 fathers
 words and
 examples
 ought to
 move us.

This was the feeling fear which these holy men had of the judgments of almighty God, and of the temporal punishments after this life. And now let us lay our hands upon our hearts, and think that when these great Saints, these great pillars of the Church do utter this dread, having lived as they had; what ought we to do, living as we do? for when we hear these men speak, we must imagine to hear the whole Church of God of those times, with all the Saints thereof to speak to us the same: for their judgment, faith, and feeling was all one. Let us hear then yet a little further, if you please, what they say to us in this behalf, what counsel they give us, what forewarning and caveat they lay before us for our greatest good.

Gen. 5.
 Aug. lib. 2.
 Gen. Con.
 Manich.
 cap. 20.

First of all, the aforesaid holy father St. *Augustine* (of whom we mean in this place most to serve our selves, for he seems above all other fathers to have made most particular consideration and reflection upon this matter) to stir us up to vigilancy in this behalf, writes thus upon those words of *Genesis*, *Thou shalt eat thy bread with the sweat of thy brows*: “ He that does not
 “ till his ground well, but suffers the same to be over-
 “ grown with thorns, shall feel the malediction of
 “ his said ground in this life, in all his works; and
 “ after this life, he shall feel in the next world the
 “ purging fire, or pains everlasting; so that no man
 “ can escape that sentence: and therefore we ought to
 “ procure, that our sufferings may be rather in this life
 “ than in the next.” This is his counsel, which in many other places he urges, as good and profitable.

“ I beseech you, brethren, says he, in another *Aug. con.*
 “ place, hear my words, and make profit of them, *2. in Psal.*
 “ *Ec.* Whosoever lives after a certain kind of carnal
 “ life in this world, and yet departs not from the lap
 “ of Christ’s Church, nor is seduced by hereticks, or
 “ divided into a contrary part, he shall be purged by
 “ a fiery furnace, for without this furnace, he cannot
 “ be placed at the right hand of God. So he.

And because some rash inconsiderate and careless
 people of his time, as now also are found among Ca-
 tholicks, tho’ they doubted not of these punishments,
 or of the rigour thereof; yet shew’d not so great fear
 or care to avoid them, as they should, because they
 were only temporal, and not eternal; he reprehends
 greatly this inconsideration, in these words: “ Some
 “ use to say, *I care not greatly how long soever I stay in*
 “ *passing this fire, seeing that at last I shall attain to life* *Aug. ser.*
 “ *everlasting*: But, alas, dear brother; let no man *41. de*
 “ say thus; for this Purgatory-fire is more sharp than *Sanctis.*
 “ any punishment which in this life can be seen, ima-
 “ gined, or felt. And whereas it is said of the day of
 “ Judgment, *That one day shall be as a thousand years,* *Psalms 89.*
 “ *and a thousand years as one day*: how does any man
 “ know whether his passage through this fire be for
 “ days or months, or perhaps years? and he that now
 “ will be loath to put one of his fingers into burning
 “ fire, ought to fear the torment both of body and
 “ soul in that fire, tho’ it were but for a little time. *Mark this*
 “ And therefore let every man labour with all his *reason of*
 “ forces, to avoid mortal sins, which cast into hell, *St. Augu-*
 “ and to redeem lesser sins by good works, so that no *stine.*
 “ part of them remain to be consumed by that fire.”
 This is *St. Augustine’s* exhortation; and he that loves
 his own good, will hearken to it.

And yet further, a little after in the same place, this
 holy father having spoken of the everlasting pains of
 the damn’d in hell, as also of these temporal punish-
 ments in Purgatory, he concludes thus: “ And there-
 fore

How small- “ fore those who desire to be deliver’d both from these
 ler sins may “ perpetual pains, as also this temporal purging fire,
 be redeem’d “ let them not commit deadly sins. And if they have
 according “ heretofore committed them, let them not cease daily
 to St. Aug- “ to redeem them with good works. And therefore
 stine. “ by continual prayers, and frequent fastings, and large
 “ alms, and especially by forgiving them that have of-
 “ fended against us, must ordinary daily sins be re-
 “ deem’d, lest they multiplying and growing to a
 “ great heap, should depress and drown our soul. Of
 “ which sins, whatsoever is not redeem’d by us in this
 “ life must be purged by that fire, whereof the Apostle
 “ speaks: That he who built straw, stubble, and
 “ other such matter upon the foundation of his belief,
 “ should suffer detriment, but yet be saved, as by fire.”
 Thus far St. *Augustine*, who gives the same exposition
 of St. *Paul*’s words * in many other places also of his
 works, which are over long to repeat: but hereby
 his judgment, sense, and feeling in this affair, are
 evidently declared.

i Cor. 3.
 * *Enchir.*
 c. 67, & 68.
 & lib. de
 fide & ope-
 ribus. 14,
 15, 16. &
 lib. 21. de
 civit. c. 21.
 & in Ps. 80.
 Points to
 be noted
 out of
 St. *Augu-*
stine.

Wherefore, to conclude this matter, we see here di-
 vers points touch’d by St. *Augustine*: as first, what
 difference there is between them that sin deadly, and
 die without repentance, and go directly to everlasting
 punishments for the same, (as presently you shall hear
 him more particularly avouch) and those other whose
 sins are less grievous, and call’d by divines; venial,
 because they separate us not wholly from God’s
 grace, nor do make us guilty of everlasting damnation,
 which sins are punish’d only with temporal pains in the
 next life, and not eternally. Secondly, St. *Augustine*
 teaches, that altho’ these pains are not eternal, yet are
 they so grievous, that all wise and good Christians ought
 greatly to fear them, they exceeding in his opinion,
 the rigour of any worldly pains or punishments that
 can be devised. Thirdly, how great our care ought to
 be, not only utterly to fly and avoid greater sins which
 make us guilty of eternal damnation; but these ordi-
 nary

nary lesser sins also, as far as we can: and that such, as through frailty do creep upon us, ought to be remedied and wiped away by sorrowful sighs, and practice of other good works. All which points do declare to us, what an exact rule of Christian life is required of us by our Saviour, and how diligent, fearful, and careful those ancient fathers were in performing the same; and how negligent, slothful, and careless we are now a-days in this important point.

And so for final conclusion of this matter, it may be observed, that the common belief of these purging pains of the next life, was so universally received in St. *Augustine's* time, that divers did pass to the other extremity, to think that all kind of sins and sinners might be purged and saved by this fire: which error St. *Augustine* himself refutes in divers parts of his works. One place will serve for an example. Thus then he, *Enchir.* writes in his *Enchiridion*: certain men are of belief, c. 67. that all such as retain the name of Christ, and are baptized in his Church, and are not cut off from the same, by any schism or heresy, will be saved by this fire, tho' they live never so wickedly, and altho' their sins be neither wiped away with penance, nor redeem'd with alms-deeds in this life; yea, tho' they persevere therein even till their last day: notwithstanding they grant their punishment will be long according to the greatness of their sins, tho' not everlasting. But they who believe this, and yet are Catholicks, are deceived. For if we consult holy Scripture, we shall find another answer. For the Apostle's words are plain: *Be not* 1 *Cor. 6.* *deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, &c. Shall possess the kingdom of God:* " But if
" these men persevering in these sins, should not-
" withstanding for the faith of Christ which they
" hold, be saved, passing through this fire, then
" would they also be received into the kingdom of
" God, which is contrary to the former words of
" St. Paul."

Thus

Thus far *St. Augustine*, whereby we may see, how far men in his days were from divers in ours, that believe no purging fire at all, which these other men would have to serve also for mortal sins never so grievous. But it was an error running to the other extream, as has been declared. And the reason hereof is, because these, who are to receive benefit by this purging fire die in the state of God's grace, and are his children, and so as children have this favour, that they may after their death be relieved by the help of others, that pray, and do good deeds for them; and principally by the publick Sacrifice of the Church, which to the others, though Catholicks, if they die in the guilt of mortal sin, cannot avail, nor be profitable. So that to use *St. Augustine's* words: *A man must merit in this world by good life, that these helps of others may avail him after his death.* And this doctrine the holy father does every where inculcate in the name of the whole Church of God; wherefore I shall only give thee, good reader, an example or two for thy better instruction, and exhortation to piety, out of many places of *St. Augustine's* works that may be alledged.

Aug. En-
chir. cap.
110.

Aug. lib.
21. de
Civit.
Dei. c. 24.

First then in his book, *of the City of God*, after a large and pious consideration of this matter, he has these words: "For some men, after their death, the prayers of the Church, or of pious people, are heard; but it is for such, who after their baptism neither lived so ill, as to be judged unworthy of such mercy, neither yet so well, as not to need such mercy." So this good father. But yet more at large does he expound the matter in another place of his works in these words: "No man ought to doubt, but that the souls departed from this world, are helped by the prayers and sacrifices of the holy Church, and the alms-deeds which are done for them, whereby almighty God is moved to deal more mercifully with them, than their sins have deserved. For the universal Church of Christ does observe and practice

Aug. ser.
34. de
verb. Apost.

" this.

“ this, as received from our ancient forefathers, that
 “ when commemoration is made, in due place of the
 “ Sacrifice, for such as are departed in the communion
 “ of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour: that
 “ then the said Sacrifice is offer’d also for them, &c.
 “ But this must be done for such men only, *who*
 “ *did live so before their death, that these things might*
 “ *be profitable to them after their death.* For as for
 “ others, that went out of this world without that faith
 “ which the Apostle says *does work by charity*; in
 “ vain are these good offices of piety done for them, who
 “ had no piety when they lived upon earth to merit
 “ this. So he.”

What sort
of men are
helped by
other mens
prayers
after death.
Ephes. 5.

And yet more exactly does he urge this matter in
 his *Enchiridion*, or instruction to the simple, because he
 would have the matter the better to be remembred, and
 imprinted in the hearts of all good Christians, and
 Catholick people. “ It is not to be denied, says he,
 “ but that the souls of them that are departed, are much
 “ relieved by the piety of their living friends; when
 “ either the Sacrifice of our Mediator is offer’d for them,
 “ or alms are given in the Church in their behalf: *But*
 “ *yet these things do only profit such, as deserved while*
 “ *they lived, that these helps might profit them after*
 “ *their death*: For that there is a certain state of life,
 “ neither so good, but that it may have need of these
 “ helps after death, neither yet so evil, but that these
 “ offices may profit them. And on the contrary,
 “ there is another state of men so good as not to
 “ need this help. And a state of others so evil that
 “ they cannot be help’d by it, when they are once
 “ dead. *Wherefore here in this life all merit is gotten*
 “ *whereby after this life a man may be relieved or not.*
 “ And let no man hope, that after his death he will
 “ be able to merit at God’s hand, which he neglected
 “ to deserve while he lived, &c.”

Aug. in En-
chirid.
cap. 100.

Different
states of
livers in
this world.

Thus this holy father, not only instructs us, what
 the holy Church of Christ did in his days, both believe,
 Z teach,

teach, and practice concerning this affair: but stirs us up also with holy stings of devotion, to the like, both for our selves, and for our friends that are dead. For our selves by endeavouring now by a good life, to make our selves capable of these holy helps after our death: and for our friends, to be faithful and solicitous for them after they are departed, that these holy helps be procured and performed for them, especially for such as we think did die so that these helps may profit them; that is to say, such as died in the Catholick faith, and received her Sacraments before their departure. For to this conclusion St. *Augustine* returns again presently in the same place, as principally to be born in mind, to wit: *That not all sorts of men, but some only are in case to take benefit by these helps of the Church*; that is to say, neither those that are very evil, and are thrown down immediately into hell: nor those who having lived very piously go strait to heaven, but a middle sort of people between these both, who may be presumed to be the greatest part of Catholick Christians, whose faith being secure, tho' in this life they have committed mortal sins; yet dying repentant, and receiving the Sacraments of the Church, the guilt is remitted, and so there only remains ordinarily some temporal satisfaction to be paid in this purging fire, as we have heard St. *Augustine* declare unto us before.

And yet further it is to be noted, that altho' in this life, we cannot know certainly of those that die, who appertain to one sort, and who to the other; who go directly to heaven, who to hell, and who remain in purgatory, except only Martyrs, of whom the Church assures us, that they presently pass to heaven; upon which ground St. *Cyprian* says, *That it is an injury to martyrdom to pray for Martyrs*, yet notwithstanding when the matter is in doubt, we may in charity pray for all; and you shall hear the reason out of St. *Augustine's* own words. For thus he writes, repeating again the former distinction of three sorts
of

of people that die in different state and condition of life.

“ I have said before, says he, that these offices of
 “ the Church, and of pious people, do not profit *Aug.*
 “ all men that are dead : and why do they not profit *Ibid. ubi*
 “ all, but for the difference of life, that each man led *supra.*
 “ in his body ? whensoever then either Sacrifice of
 “ the altar, or whatsoever alms-deeds are offer’d up in
 “ general for all baptized Christians that are de-
 “ parted, out of this life ; these oblations for such
 “ as are very good, are thanksgivings ; and for such
 “ as are not very evil, they are propitiations, or ob-
 “ tainings of pardon, and for such as died very evil,
 “ altho’ they yield no help to the dead, yet are they
 “ certain consolations to the living. And whom they
 “ do profit, it is unto this, that either their sins may
 “ wholly be forgiven, or at least, that their sufferings
 “ thereby might be made more tolerable.”

Thus he. And for further proof, that in doubtful
 cases we may pray for all, let us hear how St. *Augustine* *Aug. lib. 9.*
 pray’d and offer’d Sacrifice for his mother called *Mo-* *Confess.*
nica, after she was dead, tho’ he held her for a holy *c. 13.*
 woman, and that her sins were already wholly forgiven,
 before he pray’d for her. “ I beseech thee, good Lord,
 “ says he, even by the wounds of him that hang’d on
 “ the cross for us, and sits at thy right hand to make
 “ intercession for us, that thou forgive the sins of my
 “ mother. I know that she exercised herself in the
 “ works of mercy, and forgave from her heart all her
 “ enemies and debtors : forgive her, good Lord, her
 “ debts, forgive, forgive, I beseech thee, and enter
 “ not with her into judgment : thou hast promised *James 2.*
 “ mercy to them that are merciful. And altho’ I do
 “ believe that thou hast done already that which I do
 “ ask for my mother, yet *let these voluntary prayers of* *Psalms 142.*
 “ mine be acceptable unto thee ; for that she being near
 “ unto her death, did not think how to have her
 “ body sumptuously buried, or the same to be em-
 “ balm’d

" balm'd with sweet perfumes, or to have any choice
 " monument or sepulchre erected unto her in her
 " country : no, she did not ordain any of these things
 " unto us that stood about her, but only desired that
 " her memory might be made at thy altar, which she
 " served with such diligence, that she never omitted any
 " one day to be present, knowing that from thence is
 " dispensed that holy Host or Sacrifice, whereby is
 " blotted out the guilt of the world."

A conside-
 rable de-
 mand.

Thus writes St. *Augustine* of his own, and his mother's devotion. And now tell me, good reader, what judicious or discreet man in the world would not rather adventure his soul with these holy people, and with the whole Church of Christ in their ancient days, (for we must presume that the universal Christian and Catholick Church in St. *Augustine*'s time did believe, teach, and practice no other than St. *Augustine* himself did, who was a chief pillar thereof :) what man, I say, of judgment, discourse, or care towards his own soul, will not rather adventure the same with St. *Augustine*, and others of his faith, learning, gravity, and merits, than with a new set of people in our days, who laugh at these things, and do assure unto men salvation without either prayers or punishments, or pains at all : and who being afraid or esteeming it over laboursome to enter into any particular accounts of their own life and actions in this world, or into any care or solicitude for satisfying in the next ; have resolved rather to break with all : not unlike unto certain broken and bankrupt merchants, who seeing themselves overwhelm'd with debts, do think it the best way to cast from them their account books, or cut them in pieces, to the end they may never be forced to come to a particular reckoning.

But our Saviour Christ does teach us another far different course, warning us to agree with our adversary or creditor, while we are here in the way of this life, lest we being once cast into prison, as careless bankrupts oftentimes are, we be forced to pay the uttermost far-thing :

Mat. 5.

thing : for to this meaning does holy St. *Cyprian* interpret this parable, which is so effectual an exhortation for us to look about us, whilst we are in state to help our selves, and to make all accounts clear, in this life ; that none but careless or conscienceless people will neglect the same. And thus much of this sort of men that are to suffer temporal punishments in the life to come.

*Cyp. ep.
52. ad An-
toniam.*

S E C T. III.

Of the everlasting punishments which the damn'd are to suffer in the next life.

BUT now to pass from this sort of people to the other, whose lot must be in everlasting fire, *Cum ardoribus sempiternis*, says the Scripture, with eternal flames and burnings, and yet never to be consumed ; I mean, the reprobate that die in God's disfavour, be they Pagans, Hereticks, Schismaticks, or evil-living Catholicks, of whom St. *Augustine* has spoken before : these, I say, are in far worse case, and more pitiful plight. For altho' according to some divines the fire of hell and purgatory be all one in substance, and the pains of the one, as grievous as the other, during the time ; yet the difference between eternity and temporality in the durance thereof, is of such infinite importance, that there can be made no comparison at all : besides that, the helps and alleviations which Christians receive in the purging fire, together with the assurance of their final salvation, and hourly hope of their delivery, abbreviation, or mitigation of their pains, do exceedingly comfort them in that case. Whereunto if you add the presence of God's grace, the knowledge that they are in his favour, and in the unity and participation of his Catholick Church, from which daily they receive some sort or other of ease ; the visitation of Angels ; which as their

Isaiab 33.

brethren do come to animate and encourage them in their sufferings (of all which points, no one is granted or permitted to them that are damn'd :) all these things, I say, being laid together, do make the two states almost as different as hell and heaven, though purgatory were also a kind of hell for the time.

And according to this proportion, we must conceive, that if the punishment of this purging fire be so dreadful a thing, as St. *Augustine*, and other fathers, before have declared; what will the pains of hell it self be? and in this respect the saying of our Saviour, which he spoke to the good women of *Jerusalem*, who lamented his case, when he was going to his passion, may be consider'd: *If they do these things in green wood, what shall become of the dry?* which words St. *Peter* seems in some part to expound, when he says, *For the time is that judgment begin of the house of God, and if first of us: what shall be the end of them that believe not the Gospel of God.* If those that die in God's grace, and in the unity of his holy Catholick Church, and will in the end be saved, and reign eternally with him, be notwithstanding to be punish'd so severely for smaller faults; how will the reprobate, and damn'd, that are his enemies, and members of the devil, be punish'd in hell fire prepared for them, for their everlasting torment? truly, no understanding, no tongue, no pen, no thoughts can express the greatness, rigour, dread, or desolation of that punishment: yet shall I endeavour for our better admonition and prevention, to set down briefly some of the considerations, and contemplations, speeches and sentences, which the holy Scripture and ancient fathers do deliver unto us for our warning in this behalf.

Of the
names of
hell in
divers
tongues.

I/a. 5. &
36.

And first of all, concerning the place it self of punishment appointed for the damn'd, commonly call'd *Hell*: the Scripture in divers languages uses divers names, but all tending to express the grievousness of torments therein to be indured: as for example, in the

Latin

Latin tongue, it is call'd *Infernus*, that is, a place *Infernus*.
beneath or under ground, as most of the old fathers,
St. *Augustine* in particular, do interpret. But whether *Aug. lib.*
it be under ground or no, most certain it is, that it is *2. retract.*
a place most opposite to Heaven, which is said to be *cap. 24.*
above, and from which *Lucifer* was thrown down.
And this name is used to signify the miserable dejection *Job 11.*
and hurling down of the damn'd, to be trodden under *Isa. 14.*
the feet, not only of almighty God, but also of all
good men for ever. For so says the Scripture: *Behold Mal. 4.*
the day of our Lord comes burning like a furnace, and
all the proud and all that do impieties shall be stubble;
and the day coming shall inflame them:--- And there shall
rise to you that fear my name the son of justice.--- And you
shall tread the impious when they shall be ashes, under the
sole of your feet in the day that I do, says the Lord of
Hosts. And this will be one of the greatest miseries
that can happen to the proud and stout potentates of
the world, to be thrown down with such contempt,
and to be trodden under the feet of them, whom they
so much despised in this world.

The *Hebrew* word which the Scripture uses for hell, is *Seol*.
Seol, which signifies properly a great ditch or dungeon. In *Isa. 14.*
which sense, the same place is also call'd in the *Apocalypse*, *Apoc. 14.*
the lake of God's wrath. And again, a pool burning *Apoc. 20.*
with fire and brimstone. In *Greek*, the Scripture uses *Mat. 11.*
three words for the same place. The first is *Hades*, *Hades.*
used in the Gospel, which, as *Plutarch* notes, signifies *In com.*
a place where there is no light. The second is *Zophos*, *supra ver-*
in St. *Peter*, which signifies darkness itself. In which *ba, vive*
sense it is called also by *Job*, a dark-land, and over- *latenter.*
whelm'd with the obscurity of death. Also in the Go- *Zophos.*
spel, utter darkness. The third *Greek* word is *Tartaros*, *Job 10.*
used by St. *Peter*: which word being derived from the *Mat. 22.*
verb *tarasso* (which signifies to terrify, trouble, and vex) *Tartaros.*
imports a horrible confusion of tormenters in that place:
even as *Job* says: *There is no order but everlasting horror.* *Job 10.*
Which the Holy Ghost in another place describes more

Eccles. 30. at large in these words: *There are spirits that were created for vengeance, and in their fury they have confirm'd their torments. When the final day shall come, they shall pour out strength, and they shall accomplish the fury of him that made them; the force and rage of him that created them; fire, hail, famine, and death, all these were created for vengeance.*

Gebenna.

Mat. 5.

Mark 9.

The valley
Hinnon.

The loath-
someness of
hell.

Tophet.

Isa. 30.

The *Chaldean* word, which is also used in *Hebrew*, and translated into *Greek*, is *Gebenna*, first of all used by Christ our Saviour, for the place of those who are damn'd, as *St. Jerom* notes upon the tenth chapter of *St. Matthew's Gospel*. And this word being compounded of *gee* and *binnon*, signified a valley nigh *Jerusalem*, call'd the *valley of Hinnon*; in which, the old idolatrous *Jews* were wont to burn alive their own children, in honour of the devil, and to sound with trumpets, timbrels, and other loud instruments, whilst they were making this abominable sacrifice, to the end, the pitiful shrieks and cries of their children might not be heard. And this place was afterwards used for the receipt of all filthiness, dung, dead carrion, and the like. And most probable it is, that our Saviour used this word, *Gebenna* above all others for *Hell*, thereby to signify the miserable burning of souls in that place, the pitiful clamours and cries of the tormented, the confuse and barbarous noise of the tormenters, together with the most loathsome filthiness of the place; which otherwise is described in the Scriptures, by the names of *adders*, *snakes*, *cockatrices*, *scorpions*, and other venomous creatures, as has been and shall be afterwards declared. And with this word *Gebenna*, concurs also in signification another, used by the Prophet *Isaiab*, to denote the same place, that is to say, *Tophet*, which properly signifies the foresaid valley of the children of *Hinnon*; but is applied expressly, to declare and represent the most horrible dungeon of damn'd souls. Which *Isaiab*, talking of God as of a great king, describes in these words: *For Tophet is prepared since yesterday, prepared*

prepared of the king deep and wide. The nourishment thereof fire and much wood : the breath of our Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindling it.

Of the
pains of
hell.

And now having thus declared the names of this place, and thereby also, in some part, the nature : it remains that we examine, what manner of pains men suffer in the same. For declaration whereof, we must consider, that as heaven and hell are contrary, assign'd to contrary persons, for contrary causes : so have they in all respects contrary properties, conditions and effects ; in such sort, that whatsoever is spoken of the felicity of the one, may serve to infer the calamity of the other : as for example, when *St. Paul* says : *The eye has not seen, nor ear has heard, neither has it ascended into the heart of man what things God has prepared for them that love him* : we may infer, that the pains of the damn'd must be of like proportion. So again, when the Scripture says, that the felicity of them in heaven is a perfect felicity, containing *all goodness*, so that no one kind of pleasure can be imagined which they possess not : we must think on the contrary, that the misery of the damn'd, must be also an absolute misery, containing all possible afflictions. So that, as the happiness of the good is infinite and universal ; so is the calamity of the wicked infinite and universal also. Now in this life, all the miseries and pains which fall upon man, are but particular and not universal : as for example, we see one man pain'd in his eyes, another in his teeth, another in his stomach, another in his back : which particular pains notwithstanding, are sometimes so extream, that life is not able to resist them, and a man would not suffer them long for the gaining of a million of worlds.

1 Cor. 2.

Exod. 33.

But suppose that some one man were tormented in all the parts of his body at once ; as in his head, his eyes, his tongue, his teeth, his stomach, and in all other joints and members of his body besides : suppose, I say, he were most cruelly tormented with extream pains in all these parts together, without ease or intermission ;

The pains
of hell in-
finite and
universal.

what

what could be more miserable than this? what sight more lamentable? what calamity more unspeakable? if thou shouldst see but a brute beast lie in the street thus afflicted, I know thou couldst not but take compassion of him. Consider then what difference there is between abiding these pains for a week, and for all eternity: in suffering them upon a soft bed, and upon a burning grid-iron, and boiling furnace: among a man's friends comforting him, or among the furies of hell whipping and tormenting him. Consider this, I say, gentle reader, and if thou wouldst take a great deal of labour, rather than abide the one, temporally in this life; be content to sustain a little pain, rather than to incur the other eternally, in the life to come.

However
part has its
particular
torments
in hell.

But yet to penetrate these things a little further: not only all these parts of the body which have been instruments to sin, will be tormented together in this place of punishment; but also every sense both external and internal, for the same cause, will be afflicted with its particular torment, contrary to the object wherein it delighted most, and took pleasure in this world: as for example the lascivious eyes will be afflicted with the ugly and fearful sight of devils: the delicate ears, with the horrible noise of damn'd spirits; the dainty nostrils, with poison'd stench of brimstone, and other unsupportable filth: the delicate taste, with most ravenous hunger and unquenchable thirst: and all the sensible parts of the body, with burning fire. As also inwardly, the imagination of the damn'd will be tormented with the apprehension of pains both present and to come: the memory, with remembrance of pleasures past: the understanding, with consideration of the felicity lost, and the misery now come upon them. O poor Christian! what wilt thou do amidst the multitude of so intolerable calamities?

It is a wonderful matter, and able, as a holy father says, to make a reasonable man go out of his wits, to consider what God has reveal'd to us in the Scriptures touching

touching the dreadful circumstance of this punishment, and yet to see how little the careless men of this world do fear it. For first, touching the universality, variety, greatness, and extremity of the pains, not only the reasons before alledged, but also divers other considerations in the Scriptures, declare the same. As where it is said of the damn'd, *Cruciabuntur die & nocte*: they shall be tormented day and night. And again, *Date illi tormentum*: give her torment; speaking of *Babylon* in hell. By which words of torture and torment may well appear, that the pains in hell are exercised not for chastisement, but for affliction only and torment of the patients. And if we see commonly in this world, that tortures and torments are as great, violent, and extream, as the wit of man can reach to devise: imagine then, good brother, when God almighty will use his infinite wisdom to create torments, as he has done in hell, what manner of torments they are like to be.

The pains of Hell exercised for torment, and not for chastisement.

Apoc. 20.

Apoc. 18.

If creating an element here for our comfort, I mean the fire, he made the same so insufferable as it is, in such sort, that a man would not hold his hand therein one day for to gain a kingdom; what a fire, think you, has he provided for hell, which is not provided for comfort, but only for torment? our fire has a thousand differences from that, and therefore is truly said of the holy fathers, to be but as a painted or feign'd fire in respect of it. For first, our fire was made to comfort, as I have said, and that to afflict and torment. Our fire has need to be fed continually with wood and fuel, or else it goes out; that, burns eternally without feeding, and is unquenchable: *For (as Isaiah says) the breath of our Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindling it.* Our fire gives light, which of it self is comfortable; that admits none, but has the desolation of inexplicable darkness. Ours is out of its natural place and situation, and consequently of less force than it would be there: for which cause also we see, that it endeavours with all force to mount up, and get from us: but

The fierce nature of hell fire, with the differences from ours.

Isaiab 30.

but that of hell is in the natural and proper place wherein it was created, and therefore has all its full strength, and abides perpetually. Ours consumes the food that is cast into it, and thereby in short space dispatches the pains: that afflicts and torments, but consumes not, to the end the pains may be everlasting. Our fire is extinguish'd with water, and the rage thereof greatly abated by the coldness of the air and other elements about it: that has no such abatement or qualification at all, but has its absolute force remaining in all fury. And finally, what a strange and incredible kind of fire that is, may appear in part, by these words of our Saviour, so often repeated in the Gospel: *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* For weeping seems properly to be referr'd to the effect of extream burning in that fire, seeing the pains of scalding and burning do force tears sooner than any other pains; as appears in them who upon a sudden do put any burning thing into their mouth, or do vehemently scald any tender and sensible part of their body. And gnashing or chattering of teeth, as every man knows, proceeds principally from great and extream cold. Imagine then, my brother, what a fire this is, which has so contrary extream effects both of heat and cold. O mighty Lord! what a strange God art thou! how wonderful and terrible in all thy works and inventions! how bountiful art thou to those that love and serve thee: and how severe and terrible to those who condemn thy commandments! hast thou devised a way, how they who are burning in a lake of fire and brimstone, shall also be tormented with extream cold? what understanding of man can conceive how this can be? but thy judgments, O Lord, are depth without bottom, and therefore I leave this to thy providence, praising thee eternally for the same.

Apoc. 14.

21.

Psalms 35.

Several
pains for
several of-
fenders.

But now besides these general pains common to all that are in that place; the Scripture signifies also, that there will be particular and several torments, peculiar
both

both in quality and quantity to the sins and offences of each offender. For to that end the prophet *Isaiab* says to God, *That he will judge in measure, against measure.* And God says of himself, *I will put judgment in weight, and justice in measure.* And that is the meaning of all those threats of God to sinners, where he says, that he will pay them according to their particular works, and according to the inventions of their own hearts. In this sense it is said in the *Apocalypse* of *Babylon*, now thrown down into the lake, *As much as she has glorified her self, and has been in delicacies, so much give her torment and mourning.* From whence the holy fathers have gather'd the variety of torments that will be in that place. "As there are differences of sins, so there will be variety of torments, says *Ephraim*; for the adulterer will have one kind of torment, the murderer another, the thief another, the drunkard another, the lyar another." And so he follows on, shewing how the proud man will be trodden under feet to recompence his pride; the glutton will suffer inestimable hunger; the drunkard extream thirst; the nice mouth will be fill'd with gall; and the delicate body fear'd with hot burning irons. This is the contemplation of this holy ancient father.

Isaiab 27.
Isaiab 23.

Apoc. 18.

Lib. de vera poenit.

And yet further, besides all this universality, particularity, rigour, grievousness, and horror, which hitherto has been declared to be in these torments, the holy spirit of God reveals unto us another condition or quality, no less terrible than the former, which is the most severe strictness thereof, without all possibility of any help, ease, intermission, relaxation, respiration, or comfort. This is signified by those severe words of our Saviour so oftentimes repeated: that the damn'd shall be cast into hell, bound hand and foot: that is, without being able to resist or struggle against their torments. Also by that most dreadful shutting up of the gate; whereof our Saviour spoke in such doleful manner, when he said: the gate is shut up, and made fast for

The rigour
of pains in
hell.

for ever: that is to say, in hell, the gate of all mercy, of all pardon, of all ease, of all intermission, of all comfort, is shut for ever; and that both from heaven, from earth, from the Creator, and from all creatures; insomuch, that no consolation is ever more to be hoped for, as in the miseries of this life there is always some, but extremam desolation for all eternity.

Luke 16.
The wonderful example of the rich glutton.

The pitiful case of the rich glutton.

This strictness is likewise most lively express'd in that dreadful parable of the rich glutton in hell; who was driven to such necessity, as to desire most earnestly, that *Lazarus* might dip the top only of his finger in water, therewith to cool his tongue, in the midst of that fire wherein he was tormented, and yet could not obtain it. A small refreshing it seems that would have been to him, if he had obtain'd his request; but yet to shew the strictness of the place, it was denied him. O ye that live in sinful wealth of the world, consider but this one example of God's severity, and be afraid. This man was in such jollity a little before, that he would not give the very crumbs of his table to buy heaven; now would he give a thousand worlds, if he had them, for one drop of water to cool his tongue; Good God! what demand could be less than this? what request more humble? he durst not ask to be deliver'd thence, or to have his torments diminish'd, or to have a great vessel of water wherewith to refresh his whole body; but only so much as would stick to the top of *Lazarus's* finger to cool his tongue. To what extremam need was this poor man now driven? what a strong imagination had he of the force of one drop of water? to what pitiful change was his tongue now come, that was accustom'd to be so daintily bathed, and diligently attended with all kinds of pleasant liquors? O that one man cannot take example by another! O that *Ooliba* will not learn to be wise, by seeing the punishment of her eldest sister *Oolla*. God reveal'd the calamity inflicted on the former for her wickedness, thereby to terrify the latter from the like sin; but because

The example of one moves not another.
Ezek. 23.

because

because she profited nothing by that example, he says: For so much as thou *Ooliba* hast walked in the ways of thy sister *Oolla*: this says God to thee: I will lay the cup of thy sister upon thee: thou shalt drink it as she did, both in depth and largeness; thou shalt drink it up, even unto the very dregs.

Thus said the Prophet of God to *Jerusalem*, that would not be warn'd by the punishment of *Samaria*: and thus says the Son of God to all men that will not be terrified by these torments of the damn'd glutton. And if all this be true (as it must be, except the words of our Saviour could be false) then what wonderful people are we, that seeing our selves in danger of this intolerable misery, do not seek with more diligence to prevent the same. In respect of these extremities and rigorous dealings of God, denying all comfort and consolation at this day of everlasting revenge, holy Scripture says: that men will fall into rage, fury and utter impatience, blaspheming God, and cursing the day of their nativity; eating their own tongues for grief, and desiring the rocks, and mountains to come and fall upon them, thereby to end and finish their pains.

*Eccl. 23.**Apoc. 23.*
16.

But now, if we add to all this, the eternity and everlasting continuance of these torments; we shall see, that it increases the matter beyond all human thoughts. For in this world there is no torment so great, or affliction so violent, but that time either takes away, or diminishes the same. For either the tormenter or the tormented dies, or some other occasion happens, whereby the extremity of the tribulation is mitigated. But here no such hope or comfort can be expected; for as holy Writ affirms, they shall be tormented for ever and ever, in a pool that burns with fire and brimstone. As long as God is God, so long must they burn therein. Neither shall the tormenter or the tormented die, but both must live eternally, for the eternal misery of him that suffers.

The eternity of the pains.

Apoc. 21.

O, says a holy father in a pious meditation, if a sinner damn'd in hell, did know he had to suffer those
torments

A wonder-
ful saying
and confi-
deration of
eternity.

torments no more thousand years than there are sands in the sea, or no more thousand millions of ages, than there are creatures in heaven, hell, and earth; he would gladly rejoice, for he would comfort himself at least with this thought; that his pains would have an end. But now, this word NEVER breaks his heart, considering that after a hundred thousand millions of worlds, if there were to be so many, he has as far to his journey's end, as he had at the first day of his entrance into those torments. Consider, Christian, what a length one hour would seem to thee, if thou wert but to hold thy hand in fire and brimstone only during the space thereof, or to be stretch'd on a rack, or some other torture. We find by experience, that if a man be grievously sick, tho' he be laid upon a very soft bed, yet one night seems a long time to him. He turns and tosses himself from side to side, counting every hour that strikes, which seems to him a whole day. And if a man should say to him, that he was to endure that pain but seven years together, he would go nigh to despair for grief. If therefore one night seems so long and tedious to him that lies on a soft bed, afflicted only with a little ague, what will the lying in fire and brimstone do, when he knows evidently, that there will never be an end thereof? O dear brother, the surfeit of continuance is loathsome, even in things that are not evil of themselves. If thou shouldst be bound always to eat only one meat, altho' otherwise of it self it were not ungrateful, yet it would be displeasing to thee in the end. If thou shouldst be bound to sit still all thy life in one place, without moving, it would seem grievous and intolerable, altho' no man did torment thee in that place. What then will it be to lie eternally, in most extream torments and inexplicable desolations? is it any way to be comprehended how they can be suffer'd? O blind judgment of man, that makes no more account of these calamities!

And

And yet I might here join another circumstance of these punishments which holy Scripture it self omits not when it says, *That all these torments shall be suffer'd in darkness* : a thing dreadful of it self to man's nature, Darkness in hell. For if the stoutest man found himself alone, destitute, naked, in some desolate place of darkness, and should hear the voices or cries of infernal spirits drawing towards him ; he would be struck with fear, in regard of the circumstances of the place it self, altho' he felt no bodily hurt. For nothing is more terrible to man's imagination, than to conceive perils at hand, which the eye cannot discover, nor any thing more full of extream desolation, than to have our sight, and want for ever the use and object thereof. This then is the most miserable and desolate state of such as are damn'd, that their insupportable and everlasting pains are sustain'd in darkness. Whereunto also may be added another circumstance recorded by the Prophet, to compleat all the rest, which is, *That God shall laugh at them in these their miseries* : an affliction perhaps to be number'd amongst the greatest of all others. For as in this life, to be moan'd by a man's friend in time of adversity, is exceeding great comfort, so to be derided and laugh'd at, especially by them who only may help and redress our miseries, is a great and intolerable increase of calamity. The derision that shall be used towards the damn'd. Psalm 36.

S E C T. IV.

Of a second sort of punishment upon the damn'd, which is call'd pain of Loss or Damage, with the remedy to prevent them both.

ALL this that hitherto has been said and laid before thy eyes, is but only part of a damn'd man's punishment, call'd by divines *Pæna sensûs*, the pain of sensation or feeling ; that is to say, the sensible torments

A a and

and afflictions which are laid upon the soul and body in that dreadful eternal fire, whereof we have spoken. But besides this there is another part of punishment term'd in like manner by divines * *Pœna damni*, the pain of loss or damage, which oftentimes may be as great, or greater than that of sensation, at least, *apprehensively*, according to a phrase of schoolmen, that is to say, in estimation and worth. As for example, if some great and rich nobleman were condemn'd to die, and to lose all that ever he had or may have in the world : there are two pains, first of sense, and the other of damage. The pain of sense, is that feeling and sensible pain which he suffers in his execution, according to the quality of his death : the pains of damage are the loss of wife and children, of brethren, friends, and kinsfolk, the loss of his goods and lands, and honours, with the ruin of his posterity, the cutting off his own youth, the foregoing of his pleasures, and all delights of this world : all which put together, and represented to his mind, do oftentimes afflict him as much or more than his corporal pains, and he esteems them far more grievous to his mind, than the other to his body.

And if this fall out so in worldly losses and punishments, wherein whatsoever is lost, is but temporal; and meer trifles in respect of eternal losses ; much more is it to be understood in the case of damn'd people, whereof we treat, whose greatest loss and punishment, is to have lost, for ever and ever, the fruition, and sight of almighty God, wherein divines do assign the everlasting beatitude and supreme felicity of mankind in the next life, according to the saying of that great and famous doctor St. Thomas ; *Visio Dei per essentiam, est tota essentia nostræ beatitudinis*. The sight of God, or to see God in his own nature or essence, is the whole substance and essence of our everlasting felicity in the life to come : which being so, we may imagine what a loss it is to be deprived of this sight. As if in this world

* See St.

Tho. 1. 2.

qu. 87. art.

4. & 2. 2.

qu. 79. art.

4. & 3.

part. 9. 46.

art. 6.

The difference between pains of sense and damage.

St. Thom.

part. 1. q. 1.

art. 4. &

q. 12. art.

1. q. 6. art.

3. &c.

world a man should lose for ever all sight, feeling, and influence of the Sun, his vigour, his sense, and life, and should be condemn'd to live in perpetual darkness and deadly cold; what a loss would it be! or how would he esteem it, if he were a sensible man? and yet it does not express the thousandth part of what it is to lose God, and the sight of fruition of his infinite, incomprehensible, and everlasting glory. For which respect, this loss is placed by the Scripture in the first rank of all other losses, damages, and miseries to be laid upon a damn'd man: *In the land of the holy he has done wicked things, and he shall not see the glory of God.* And this loss contains all other losses and damages in it: such are the loss of eternal bliss and joy, of eternal glory, of eternal society with the Angels; and the like: which losses when a damn'd man considers, as he cannot but consider them perpetually, he is more grieved, as divines say, than at all other sensible torments that he abides.

And hence proceeds that great and general torment which is so often repeated in holy Writ, by the name of the *worm of our conscience*; so call'd, because as a worm lies eating and gnawing the wood wherein it abides, so will the remorse of our conscience lie within us gnawing and tormenting us for ever. And this worm or remorse will principally consist in bringing to our minds the means and causes of our present extrem calamities: to wit, our folly and negligence, whereby we lost the felicity which other men have got. And at every one of these considerations, this worm will sting with a remorse, which will reach even to the very bottom of our heart. As when it will lay before us all the occasions we had offer'd to avoid the misery wherein now we are fallen, and to gain the glory which we have lost; how easy it had been to have done it; how nigh oftentimes we were resolving to do it: and yet how unfortunately we left that thought again. How many times we were foretold

The worm
of consci-
ence.

Mat. 9.
Isaiah 66.
Eccl. 7.
Judith 6.

The
thought of
the damn'd

of this danger, and yet how little care and fear we had of the same. How vain those worldly trifles were, wherein we spent our time, and for which we lost heaven, and fell into these most intolerable miseries. How they are now exalted, whom we thought fools in the world, and how we are proved fools and derided, who thought our selves wise. These things, I say, and a thousand more, being laid before us by our own conscience, will give us infinite grief and desolation, it being now too late to amend them. And this grief is call'd the worm or remorse of our conscience; which worm will force men to weep and howl more at that day, than any other torment, considering how negligently, foolishly, and vainly, they are come into those insupportable torments, and that now there is no more time, place, or leave to redress their errors.

The time
of eternal
weeping.

Now is the time of weeping, wailing, and everlasting lamentation for these men; and yet all in vain. Now they will begin to fret and rage, and marvel at themselves, saying: where was our wit? where was our understanding? where was our judgment, when we follow'd vanities, and contemn'd the affairs of our salvation? this is the talk of sinners in hell, says the Scripture, What has our pride, or what has the glory of our riches profited us? they are all now vanish'd like a shadow: we have wearied out our selves in the way of iniquity and perdition, but the way of our Lord we have not known. This, I say, must be the everlasting song of the damn'd and tormented conscience in hell. An eternal repentance without remedy. By which extremity, he will be brought to such despair, as the Scripture also notes, that he will turn into fury against himself, tear his own flesh, rent his own soul, if it were possible, and invite the fiends and furies to torment him more, for that he has so beastly behaved himself in this world, as not to provide in time for this principal affair, the only one indeed, worthy to have been thought on. Oh if he could now have but another

Sap. 5.

short

short life to lead in the world, how would he pass it over! with what diligence! with what severity! but this will not be granted, neither is there any price or value to purchase it. Only we, dear brethren, that are yet alive, do enjoy this inestimable grace and treasure of time for our amendment, if we are so happy as to resolve to make advantage thereof. One of these days we shall be past it also, and shall not recover the same again, no, not one hour, if we would buy it with a thousand worlds; as no doubt but that the damn'd would do, if it lay in their power. Let us now then so use this benefit, that when we are past hence, we may have no need to wish our selves here again.

This is the only time wherein we may avoid all; now is the season when we may put our selves out of danger of all these terrors, now I say, if we resolve out of hand. For we know not what will become of us to morrow. It may be that to morrow our hearts will be as hard and careless of these affairs, as they have been heretofore, and as *Pharaoh's* heart was after *Moses's* departure from him. O that he had resolved himself thoroughly while *Moses* was with him: how fortunate a creature had he been? if the rich glutton had taken the time while *Lazarus* lay at his door, how blessed a man had he made himself? he was foretold his misery, as we are now, by *Moses* and other Prophets, according to what our Saviour does signify; but he would not hear. Afterwards he fell into such admiration of his own folly, that he would needs have *Lazarus* sent from *Abraham's* bosom to his brethren in the world, to warn them of his error. But *Abraham* told him, it was needless; for that they would not have believed *Lazarus* in this case, but rather, perhaps, have persecuted him as a liar and defamer of their honourable brother deceased, if he should have revealed unto them his torments. And so indeed would the wicked men of this world do now, if one should come and tell them

The passing commodity of the present time,

Luke 16.

Great negligence
and oversight.

that their parents or friends are damn'd in hell for such and such offences, as themselves are guilty of. What then can God devise to do for the saving of these men? what way, what means, what order can he take, when neither warning, nor example of others, nor threats, nor exhortations, will do any good? We know, or may know, that leading the life we do, we cannot be saved. We know, and ought to know, that many before us have been damn'd for less offences. We know, and cannot chuse but know, that we must shortly die, and receive our selves, as they received, living as they did, or worse. We see by what is laid down before, that the pains which do attend and expect the wicked, are intolerable and yet eternal. We confess them most unfortunate and miserable, that for any pleasure or advantage of this world, are now fallen into them. What then should hinder us from breaking off quickly with all impediments, all bands and chains of this world, that hinder us from this true and zealous resolution? why should we sleep one night in sin, seeing that night may chance to be our last, and so the everlasting cutting off all hope to come?

The conclusion.

Resolve thy self therefore, dear brother, if thou art wise, and clear thy soul from these dangers, while God is willing to receive thy amendment, and moves thee thereunto by these means, as he did the rich man by *Moses* and his other Prophets, while he was yet in his prosperity. Let his example be oftentimes before thy eyes, and consider it, and it will do thee good. God is a wonderful God, and to shew his patience and infinite goodness, he invites us in this life, seeks us, and lays himself, as it were, at our feet, to move us thereby to our own good; to win us, to draw us, and to save us from perdition. But after this life, he alters his course of dealing; he turns over the leaf, and changes his style. From a lamb, he becomes a lion to the wicked, and from a Saviour, a just and severe punisher. What can be said or done by his divine majesty to

move

move us? he that is forewarn'd, and sees his own danger before his face, and yet is not stirr'd up nor made the more wary or fearful thereby, may well be pitied, but surely by no means can be helped, making himself incapable of all remedies that can be used.

But here now, some perhaps moved with God's holy spirit, may chance to say, well, and what remedy for avoiding these miseries thus threatn'd to us that live in sin? I see my own peril, says one, I believe the menaces of God here set down, and my heart begins to tremble at them, because my conscience is witness against me : but what remedy will you prescribe? whereunto I answer first, that these very two things by you mention'd, faith, and fear of God's judgments, are two great steps unto the true remedy: faith being the first foundation of all good motions; and fear the first part of the building that is to be laid thereon: for which cause, fear is call'd also, *the beginning of wisdom*, and consequently also, the beginning of our conversion.

The remedies for all,

Faith and fear two great steps to amendment.

But yet these two only are not sufficient, for St. *James* says even of the devils themselves, they believe and fear, and yet will not be saved. Wherefore we must pass further unto those other virtues which divines require, together with faith and fear, to wit, hope and charity, and that other which does flow out of all these, and is the proper remedy, penance, and repentance for our former faults; with a firm resolution of true amendment for the time to come.

This I say, is the true remedy; this is the sovereign salve and medicine for all our sores and maladies in this kind. This is the only thing that can prevent all the foresaid miseries and calamities, that can avert all perils of God's threats and menaces; that can pacify his wrath, and this the very victory in a certain manner gain'd by a sinner over God's justice and judgments; and finally this the antidote of hell fire it self. For as on the one side divines do hold that God never

The excellency of repentance

* See St. *Tho.* 3. p. 9. 86. art. 1. & 2. & 4. *Sot.* in 4. *Sen. dist.* 14. qu. 2. art. 5. did, * nor will, nor can, by his ordinary power at least, forgive any sinner that does not repent; so on the other, do they also hold, that he never did, nor will, nor can in mercy, deny any sinner pardon, that truly returns unto him by due repentance. So that in this combat, whensoever the repentance of an humble sinner does contend with God's justice, it overcomes, and has the victory.

Note attentively. Why then, dear brother, wilt thou not lay hands on this remedy while thou hast time? hear what St. *Austine* says in this case: "The first step to our salvation is, not to sin; but the second, is not to despair of pardon: and he does everlastingly destroy himself, that will not run to his merciful Judge by the remedy of penance." And the same father in another place talking with one that was sore troubled with fear, and used those words of the Prophet: *Whither shall I fly from his face?* St. *Austine* answers, whither wilt thou fly, my brother, but to his mercy by repentance, whose omnipotency thou hast offended by sinning; for no man does well fly from him, but unto him, that is to say, from his severity to his goodness.

Psal. 138.
Aug. hom.
10. cap. 14.

With what care men seek to escape temporal death but not eternal.

If this remedy against so great evils, and this assurance from so inexplicable calamities were sought for, never so far off, and with never so great labour or charges; yet wisdom would persuade us to procure it: but much more, if it be near us, facile and easy to be had. If a man condemn'd to die in this world a most cruel death, by all sorts of torments, being brought forth by the justice to be led towards his execution, should be told that he might easily escape, or procure a remedy for all, by such and such means: how glad would he be? how willingly would he hearken? how diligently would he attend to procure the means of obtaining his pardon? how vigilant, how careful would he shew himself? he would neither eat nor drink, nor take rest, nor talk of any other matter, until he had obtain'd his security. And yet our case is much more

urgent

urgent than this of his; for he was condemn'd but to temporal death, whereas a sinner is condemn'd to death everlasting, and is no less in the way towards his execution than the other, and may arrive much sooner, because he has no minute of time secure in this life. And how then are we so negligent and careless in so great and important an affair? the mercy of Christ our Saviour, as it has foretold us the danger, so has it placed the remedy near us, and made it more facile, leaving it in our own choice, will, and power, to use the same, and receive the benefit thereof, as often as we shall have need and desire to do our selves good thereby. For what is more easy, than for a man to dislike his own naughty life, and then to receive remission thereof by the power of Christ's Catholick Church? which of his infinite mercy he has left unto her, to this effect, and is open and ready for all; so that whosoever she, by her priests and bishops shall absolve and release on earth, upon their repentance, Christ does also absolve in heaven, according to his commission in the Gospel: whose sins soever you forgive on earth, they are forgiven in heaven. Let us hear St. *Austine* a little in this matter. Thus then he concludes, after a long discourse in his commentaries upon St. *John's* Gospel.

The easiness of the remedy that delivers from hell.

John 20.

“ Christ therefore gave unto his Church the keys
 “ (in St. *Matthew's* Gospel) to bind and loose sins, in
 “ such sort; that, whatsoever she should loose upon
 “ earth, should be loosed in heaven; and whatsoever
 “ she should bind upon earth, should be bound in
 “ heaven. That is to say, that whosoever will not be-
 “ lieve that his sins may be forgiven him in Christ's
 “ Church his sins shall not be forgiven: but whosoever
 “ does believe that they may be forgiven, and being
 “ within the lap of the said Church, does turn himself
 “ from his sins; he by that faith and correction of the
 “ Church is heal'd: but he that believes not, that they
 “ are forgiven, is made worse by despair.” So he.

Mat. 16.

Aug. tract.
 22. In
Joan. 8^o
lib. de util
pœn. cap. 3.

And

And the same father in another part of his works, considering the folly and perversity of many sinners in this behalf, because they did not use the benefit of this excellent divine remedy while they had time; breaks forth as it were into admiration, and indignation against them, saying thus: “ And is there any man so much
 “ his own enemy, who feeling himself intangled with
 “ the burden of sins, after baptism, will doubt to
 “ change his life, while time serves him.-----For by
 “ his persevering in sin, he heaps to himself vengeance
 “ in the day of tribulation of God’s just judgments,
 “ as the Apostle testifies: and that he yet lives, it is
 “ the patience of almighty God, endeavouring to bring
 “ him to penance. Wherefore is there any man, who
 “ being, as before I have said, entangled with the
 “ deadly chains of sins, will refuse, or delay, or doubt
 “ to fly unto the keys of the Catholick Church, thereby
 “ to be absolved upon earth, to the end he may be
 “ free in heaven? or will any man dare promise unto
 “ himself salvation after this life, only because he is a
 “ Christian?” thus reasons *St. Austine*, and exhorts men every where to esteem highly, and to use to their eternal welfare, this singular benefit of the Church’s absolution, left by our Saviour under the name of *Keys*: a spiritual authority to bind and loose sins, and consequently also to open or shut heaven’s gates to such as make recourse unto her.

Aug. hom.
56. c. 10.

Rom. 2.

St. Austine’s exhortation to use the Church’s benefit of absolution.

Cypr. lib. 1.
Ep. 2.
St. Cyprian’s esteem of this benefit.

And all other ancient fathers do concur in this point, with *St. Austine*. That blessed bishop and martyr *St. Cyprian*, writing to *Cornelius* bishop of *Rome* at that time, acknowledges this singular privilege of Catholick Christians that live within the unity of the Church, to whom he says, that when they die calling upon the Church with sorrow and prayers; the help of salutary hope is not denied: which help he expounds to be this most comfortable law of Christ, for so he calls it, that they may be absolved in heaven of those sins, whereof they were first absolved by the Church upon earth.

St.

St. *Hieron* also extols wonderfully the greatness of this benefit and privilege, which we receive by the hands of priests in the Catholick Church, in absolving us from our sins, of whom he says: they having the keys of the kingdom of heaven in their hands, do in a certain sort, by binding and loosing sins, judge before the day of Judgment. Or as the other great Saint, and most ancient father St. *Hilary*'s words are: whose judgment upon earth, to wit, of priests, becomes a precedent authority in heaven; so that whatsoever sins are bound or loosed by them on earth, do obtain a decree of the same nature in heaven. What thing can be spoken more effectually than this!

*Hieron. ap.
ad Heliod.*

*Hilar. com
16. in Mat*

But yet above all other fathers, St. *Chrysostom* exaggerates in a certain sort, this matter, and the singular importance thereof; as also condemns the madness of worldly negligent men and sinners, in not making their profit of this heavenly treasure, which Christ has left them for the forgiveness of sins in this life, and thereby the avoiding of hell fire in the next. Hear his words: "Earthly princes, says he, have power indeed to bind, "but it is only our bodies; but the power of priests, "whereof I have spoken, touches also our very souls: "yea, it reaches even to heaven it self, in such sort, "that whatsoever priests determine hear beneath, that "God ratifies above, confirming the sentence of his "servants on earth. And what will you say then of "this, but that all heavenly power is granted unto "priests also in this world:" whose sins soever you *retain*, says Christ, *they are retain'd*. What greater authority, can there be imagined than this? "God the "Father has given all power to his Son, and I see that "God the Son has given all that power again to priests "upon earth." Thus St. *Chrysostom*, exhorting men exceedingly to make great account of this rare benefit, and thereby to seek to prevent the punishments of the life to come.

*Chrys. l. 3.
de Sacred.*

St. *Chrysostom*'s discourse of priests authority in absolving sin.

John 20.

And

Two conditions required for the benefit of delivery from our sins.

And now, dear brother, wilt thou not rather join thy self with these holy fathers *St. Cyprian*, *St. Hilary*, *St. Hierom*, *St. Chrysostom*, *St. Augustine*, and others their equals, for all are of one doctrine, than to adventure thy soul with the ignorance, and negligence of careless people? thou seest the infinite benefit here offer'd thee: suppose it were offer'd to one that is already in hell fire? how would he hearken unto it? thou seest how easy the matter is made unto thy hands; for I see only two conditions required by these fathers for thee to enjoy the benefit, and to be set free from thy sins, and consequently also from the danger of all those punishments before mention'd due unto sin. The one condition is, that thou be within the lap of the Catholick Church, for that *St. Austine* and *St. Cyprian* expressly before cited require. The other, that the benefit be taken during this life; for after, it is too late; and because we have spoken sufficiently before out of *St. Austine*, of the second condition; I will now only tell you concerning the first condition, that not only *St. Austine*, but all other fathers in like manner do every where so greatly inculcate this condition *of being a member of the Catholick Church*, that without this, no remission of sins can ever be had or hoped for at all. For that except we be within the union and communion of this Church, we can receive no benefit at all, either by sacraments, sacrifices, prayers, merits, alms-deeds, or whatsoever other benefit besides, which we have also shew'd and declared * elsewhere more at large, yea altho' we should suffer death and martyrdom it self for the name and profession of Christian religion, yet we should not be saved. For the common sentence of the fathers and doctors of Christ's Catholick Church is and has always been firmly held by all and every one: *that out of the Church there is no salvation.*

* In the Examina-
tion of
Fox's Ca-
lendar in
præfat.

Wherefore, dear Christian, to conclude this whole matter, if God move thy heart to amend thy life, and to get thy self out of the dangerous state of sin wherein
thou

thou standest, and this by the means here set down, for there are no other means, the first point which thou hast to do, is to make thy self-capable of this benefit, according to the meaning of those holy fathers before mention'd; and then having received that freedom from the burden of sin, together with the inward consolation of God's holy spirit, which true repentant people are wont to receive in the church, thou mayst with more comfortable hope and consolation, attend unto the exercise of good works, which holy Scripture calls, *the worthy fruits of true penance*: and so thou shalt come, not only to avoid at last the danger of those infernal fires before-mention'd, but to gain also to thy self that rich and precious crown of justice, which St. *Paul*, arriv'd now at his death, did assure, as *Luke 3.* as well to himself, as to all others that follow his example. Of which crown, and of the glory and riches thereunto belonging, we are now to treat more particularly in the following chapter.

C H A P. XII.

Of the most honourable, excellent, and magnificent rewards and payments, ordain'd for such as truly serve God, and do employ their time in performance of his most holy Commandments.

SECT. I. *That God is a most liberal rewarder.*

THE motives, reasons, and considerations laid down before in the precedent chapters, might well suffice to stir up the heart of any reasonable Christian, to take in hand this resolution whereof we at present treat, and whereunto I so much covet to persuade thee, gentle reader, for thy own good and profit. But because all hearts are not of one constitution in
this

God the
the best
pay master

this respect, nor all wills drawn and moved with the same means and inducements: I purpose to adjoin here a consideration of advantage, whereunto commonly each man is prone by nature; and which consequently may, perhaps, be of greater force to work that effect which we desire, than any thing else that hitherto has been said. I intend therefore in this place, to treat of the benefits which are reap'd by the service of almighty God; of the gain procured thereby; and of the most liberal reward, which God renders to his servants above all other masters that can be served. And tho' the just fear of being punish'd, if we serve him not, might be sufficient to drive us to this resolution; and the infinite benefits already received, might induce us to the same out of gratitude, of both which somewhat has been said before; yet if these motives were not sufficient, certainly the advantages that accrue to us from serving God, ought forcibly to persuade us to this resolution. For as God in all other things is a majestic God, full of bounty, liberality, and magnificence; so he is in this point above all others; in such sort, that altho' whatsoever we do, or can do in his service, is truly but a debt and tribute due unto him, and for that reason of it self deserves nothing: yet out of his munificent bounty, he lets pass no part of our service unrewarded; no, not so much as a *cup of cold water bestowed in his name.*

Mat. 10.
Mark 9.

Gen. 22.

God commanded *Abraham* to sacrifice unto him his only son *Isaac*, whom he so dearly loved: but when he was ready to do the same, God said unto him, *Do it not*, it is enough for me that I see thy obedience. And for that thou hast not refused to obey me; *By my own self have I sworn, says the Lord, because thou hast done this thing --- I will bless thee, and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea shore --- and in thy seed shall be bless'd all the nations of the earth, because thou hast obey'd my voice.* Was not this, think you, a most liberal pay for so little

little pains ? king *David* discoursing with himself on a certain time, how his own palace being richly built of cedar timber, the ark of his Lord and Maker was lodged only under a poor tent ; resolved with himself to erect a house and temple for the same. Which thought only, God took in so good part, that he sent *Nathan* the Prophet unto him presently, to refuse the thing, but yet to tell him, that because he had determined such a matter, God would build a house, or rather a kingdom, to him and his posterity, which should last for ever, and from which he would never take away his mercy, what sins or offences soever they committed. Which liberal promise we see now fulfilled in the Church of Christ, descended originally from that noble family. Why should I labour to heap together more examples to this effect ? Christ himself gives a general note hereof, when he calls the workmen, and pays to each man his wages so duly ; as also when he says of himself, *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me.* By which places it is evident, that God suffers no labour in his service to be lost or unpaid. And altho', as hereafter * shall be shew'd more amply, he pays also, and that abundantly, in this present life, yet, as by these two texts appears, he defers his chief pay until his coming in the end of the day ; that is, after this life, *in the resurrection of the just*, as himself says in another place.

Mat. 20.

Apoc. 22.

*In the second part and second chapter of this book.

S E C T. II.

Of the reward and payment in general.

CONCERNING the payment reserved for God's servants in the life to come, we are now to consider what manner of thing it is, and whether it be worth so much labour and pains, as the service of God in this world requires. And first of all, if we believe the holy Scripture, calling it a *kingdom, a heavenly kingdom ;*

kingdom; an eternal kingdom, a most blessed kingdom; we must needs confess it to be a marvellous great reward: seeing that in this world there can hardly be found so bountiful a monarch, as will bestow a kingdom upon his servant in recompense of his service. And if he would, and were able to perform the same; yet would it be neither a heavenly, nor eternal, nor blessed kingdom, such as this is which God has promised unto his servants. Secondly, if we credit that which St. Paul says of this reward, that neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived how great it is; then we must have a greater opinion of it: because we have seen many wonderful things in our days; we have heard more wonderful; we may conceive most wonderful and almost infinite. How then shall we come to understand the greatness, and value of this reward? surely no tongue created either of men or Angels, can express the same! no imagination conceive, no understanding comprehend it! Christ himself has said, no man knows it, but he that enjoys it. And therefore he calls it *hidden manna* in the same place. Notwithstanding, as it is reported of a learn'd geometrician, who finding the length of *Hercules's* foot upon the hill *Olympus*, drew out his whole body by the proportion of that one part: so we by some things set down in holy Scripture, and some other circumstances agreeing thereunto, may frame a conjecture of the matter, tho' it be far unequal and inferior to the thing it self.

I have before declared how this reward in holy Writ is called a *heavenly, everlasting, and most blessed kingdom*. By which words is signified, that all who are found worthy of this reward will be kings, and most happy kings. To like effect it is call'd in other places, a *crown of glory, a throne of majesty, a paradise or place of pleasure, a life everlasting*. St. John the Evangelist being by a special privilege, let into some knowledge and feeling thereof, as well for his own comfort, as for

for ours, takes in hand to describe it, by comparison of a city : affirming, that the whole body thereof was of pure gold, environ'd with a great and high wall of the precious stone call'd *Jaspis*. This wall had also twelve foundations, made of twelve distinct precious stones, which he there names ; also twelve gates, made of twelve rich stones call'd *Margarites*, and every gate was an intire *Margarite*. The streets of the city were paved with gold, interlaid also with pearls and precious stones. The light of the city was the clearness and splendor of Christ himself, sitting in the midst thereof ; from whose seat proceeded a river of water as clear as christal, to refresh the city ; and on both sides of the banks, there grew the tree of life, giving out continual and perpetual fruit. There was no night in that city, nor any defiled thing enter'd thereinto ; but they who are within shall reign, says he, for ever and ever.

The description of paradise used by St. *John*. *Apoc.* 21, & 22.

By this description of the most rich and precious things that this world has, St. *John* would give us to understand, the infinite value, glory, and majesty of this felicity prepared for us in heaven : tho' as I have noted before, it being the princely inheritance of our Saviour Christ, the kingdom of his Father, the eternal habitation of the Holy Trinity, prepared before all worlds to set out the glory, and to express the power of him that has no end or measure, either in power or glory : we may very well think with St. *Paul*, that neither tongue can declare it, nor heart imagine it. When God takes upon him to do a thing for the declaration of his power, wisdom, and eternal majesty ; imagine you what a thing it will be ? It pleased him to make certain creatures to serve him in his presence, and to be witnesses of his glory ; and thereupon with a word he created the Angels, both for number and perfection of nature so strange and wonderful, that the thought thereof astonishes our understanding. As for their number, they were almost infinite, passing the number of all the creatures of this inferior world, as divers * learned men,

The magnificency of God expressed diversly.

* See St. *Tho.* 4^{art} 1. q. 50. art 3. *S. Dionys.* celesti Hier. c. 14.

and some ancient fathers are of opinion : altho' *Daniel*, according to the custom of holy Writ, does put a certain number for an uncertain, when he says of Angels :
Dan. 7. A thousand thousands did minister unto him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand did stand about him to assist. And as for the perfection of their nature, it is such, being celestial spirits, that they far surpass all inferior creatures, in natural knowledge, power, beauty, and all other excellencies, which in
Psalms 103. one Angel are more as to the perfection of nature, than in all other creatures of the world put together. What an infinite majesty then does this argue in the Creator ?

After this, when many of these Angels were fallen, it pleased almighty God to frame another creature, far inferior in nature to these, to fill up the places of such as were fallen ; and thereupon created man of a piece of clay, appointing him to live in this world, as a place of entertainment and trial for a time ; which place, God notwithstanding determin'd afterwards to destroy again.
Apoc. 1. But yet in creating this transitory world (which is but a base cottage in regard of his own eternal habitation) consider, good reader, what power, magnificence, and majesty he has shew'd. What heavens, and how wonderful has he created ? what infinite stars and other lights has he devised ? what elements has he framed ? and how marvellously has he compacted them together ? the seas tossing and tumbling without rest, and replenish'd with infinite sorts of fish, the rivers running incessantly through the earth, like veins in man's body, and yet never empty, nor overflowing the same : the earth it self so furnish'd with variety of creatures, that the hundredth part thereof is not used nor employed by man, but only remains to shew the full hand, and strong arm of the Creator. And all this, as I said, was done in an instant, with one word only, and that for the use of a small time in respect of the other future life, which is to last for all eternity. What then may

we imagine that the habitation prepared for that eternity will be? if the cottage of his meanest servant, made only for a time, to bear off, as it were, a shower of rain, be so princely, so rich, so majestic, as we see this world is; what must we think that the king's palace it self is, appointed for all eternity, for himself and his friends to reign together? we must needs think it to be as great, as the power and wisdom of the Maker could reach to perform; and that is, incomparably, and above all measure, infinite.

The great king *Assuerus*, who reigned in *Asia* over a hundred and twenty seven provinces; to discover his power and riches unto his subjects, made a feast as the Scripture says, in his great city of *Susa* for all the princes, states, and potentates of his dominions, for a hundred and fourscore days together. *Isaiah* the Prophet says, that our God, and Lord of Hosts, will at the last day make a solemn banquet to all his people upon the hill and mount of heaven. And this banquet will be so solemn, that the very Son of God himself, chief Lord of the feast, will serve in the same, as by his own words he promises. What manner of banquet then will this be; how magnificent and majestic? especially seeing it is not only to last a hundred and fourscore days, as that of *Assuerus* did, but more than a hundred and fourscore millions of ages; not served by men as *Assuerus* feast was, but by Angels, and the very Son of God himself; not to open the power and riches of a hundred and twenty seven provinces, but even of almighty God, the king of kings, and the lord of lords, whose power and riches are without end, and greater than all his creatures put together can conceive. How glorious a banquet will this be? how triumphant the joy of this festival day? how incomprehensible a bliss to be a partaker thereof; O most miserable and foolish children of *Adam*, that are born to so rare and singular a dignity, and yet cannot be brought to consider, love, or esteem the same.

Heb. i.

Isaiah 25.

Many other things there are, whereby to conjecture the exceeding greatness of this reward and felicity: as for example, to consider, that if God has given so many pleasures, and comfortable gifts in this life, which notwithstanding is a place of banishment, a habitation of sinners, a vale of misery, and appointed only for a time of repenting, weeping, mourning, and bewailing; what will he do in the life to come, to the just, to his friends, in the time of joy and marriage of his Son! This was a most forcible consideration with *St. Augustine*, who in the secret speech of his soul with God, said thus: “ O my Lord, if thou for this vile
 “ body of ours, hast given us so great and innumerable
 “ benefits, from the firmament, from the air, from
 “ the earth, from the sea, by light, by darkness, by
 “ heat, by shadow, by dews, by showers, by winds,
 “ by rain, by birds, by fish, by beasts, by trees, by
 “ multitude of herbs, and variety of plants, and by
 “ the ministry of all thy creatures: O sweet Lord,
 “ what manner of things, how great, how good, and
 “ how innumerable are those which thou hast prepared
 “ for us in our heavenly country, where we shall see
 “ thee face to face? if thou do such great things for us
 “ in our prison, what wilt thou give us in our palace?
 “ if thou givest so many things in this world, both to
 “ good and evil men, what hast thou laid up for good
 “ men in the world to come? if both thy enemies and
 “ friends are so well provided for in this life, what will
 “ thy friends receive in the life to come? if there be
 “ so great solaces in these days of tears, what joy will
 “ there be in that day of the marriage? if our jail and
 “ prison contain so great matters, what will our country
 “ and kingdom do? O my Lord and God, thou art a
 “ great God, and great is the multitude of thy magni-
 “ ficence and sweetness. And as there is no end of thy
 “ greatness, nor number of thy mercies, nor depth of
 “ thy wisdom, nor measure of thy benignity, so is
 “ there neither end, number, depth, length, great-
 “ ness,

Apoc. 19.

August.
Solil. c. 21.

Psalms 30.
 8c 47.

“ nefs, or measure of thy rewards to them that love thee and do fight for thee.” Hitherto *St. Austine.*

Another method to conceive some part of the reward in the life to come, is, to remember and weigh the manifold promises of almighty God, to honour and glorify all those that shall love and serve him. *Whofoever shall honour me,* says he, *I will make him glorious.*

And the Prophet *David*, complains as it were, joyfully, that God’s friends were too much honour’d by him. *1 Reg. 2. Psalm 138.*

Which he might with much more cause have said, if he had lived in the New Testament, and had heard that promise of Christ, of which I spoke before, that his servants should sit down and banquet, and that himself would serve and minister unto them in the kingdom of his father. What understanding can conceive how great this honour can be? but yet in some part it may be guess’d, by his saying, *That they shall sit down with him*; and as *St. Paul* adds, shall be judges not only of men but also of Angels. It may also be conjectured by the exceeding great honour which he at certain times has done to his servants even in this life, wherein notwithstanding they are placed, to be despised and not to be honour’d.

Luke 12.

How great honour was that, think you, which he did to *Abraham* in the sight of so many kings and princes of the earth: as, of *Pharaoh*, *Abimelech*, *Melchisedech*, and others? how great honour was that he did to *Moses* in the face of *Pharaoh*, and of all his court, *Gen. 12. 14. 22.*

by the wonderful signs that he wrought by him? what excessive honour was that he did to holy *Joshua*, when in the sight of all his army, he stop’d the Sun and Moon *Exod. 5, 6, 7, 8. Joshua 10.*

in the midst of the firmament, at *Joshua’s* appointment, obeying therein, as the Scripture says, to the voice of a man? what honour was that he did to *Isaiab* in the *Isaiab 38.*

presence and sight of king *Ezekias*, when he made the Sun to go back ten degrees in the heavens? what honour was that he did to *Elias* in the sight of wicked *Achab*, when he yielded the heavens into his hands, *3 Reg. 17.*

and bid him to say, that neither rain nor dew should

and bid him to say, that neither rain nor dew should

and bid him to say, that neither rain nor dew should

fall upon the ground, for some years, but only by the words of his mouth? what honour was that he did to *Elifeus* in the sight of *Naaman* the noble *Syrian*, whom 4 *Reg.* 15. he cured of the leprosy with which he was infected, whose bones also after his death, raised up the dead to life? Finally, not to allege more examples, what singular honour was that he did to all the Apostles of his Son; that as many as ever they laid their hands upon were heal'd from all infirmities, as St. *Luke* affirms? nay, which is yet more, the very girdles and napkins of St. *Paul* had the same effect: and yet more than that also, as many as came within the shadow of St. *Peter*, were heal'd from their diseases. Is not this marvellous honour even in this life? was there ever monarch, prince, or potentate of the world, that could vaunt of such points of honour? and if Christ did this to his servants even in this world, whereof notwithstanding he says, his kingdom was not; what honour can we think he has reserved for the life to come, where his kingdom will be in all fulness, and where all his servants will be crown'd, as eternal kings with him.

The
Apostles
Acts 5.

Acts 19.

Acts 5.

Lastly for some further declaration of this matter, and for expressing the incomparable excellency of heavenly bliss; some divines use a consideration of the three different places, whereunto man by his creation is ordain'd, altho' in all points it is not necessary to hold the same just proportion. The first of which places is our mother's womb; the second, this present world; the third *Cælum Empyreum*, which is the place of bliss in the life to come. Now in these three places, say the learned, we must hold some like proportion, between the third and second place, as we see sensibly to be observed between the second and first. So that in what proportion the second does differ from the first; in like measure must the third be different from the second, or rather much more? for that eternal and heavenly things do exceed all comparison of transitory things among themselves. By this proportion then we must

must say, that as far as the world does surpass the womb of one private woman ; so much in all beauty, delights, and majesty, does the place of heavenly bliss surpass all this whole world with the ornaments, thereof. And as much as a man living in the world, does exceed a child in his mother's belly, for strength of body, beauty, wit, understanding, learning, and knowledge ; so much and far more does a Saint in heaven surpass all men in this world, in all these excellencies, and infinite more besides. Think then how great horror a man of perfect age would conceive to return into his mother's womb again ; and certainly as much and far greater would a glorified soul have to come back from that eternal bliss into this vale of misery. The nine months also of life in the mother's womb, are not so little in respect of any man's age in the world, as is the longest life upon earth, in respect of everlasting life in heaven. Nor the blindness, ignorance, and other miseries of the child in his mother's womb, are any way to be compared to the blindness, darkness, folly, and other calamities of this life ; in respect of the clear light, most excellent knowledge, divine understanding, and other singular prerogatives of the Saints in heaven. So that by all these reasons laid together, there may a general conjecture be framed of the most infinite and incomprehensible excellency of this reward whereof we treat.

S E C T. III.

Of the two parts of felicity in Heaven ; to wit, that of the soul, and that of the body.

BUT to consider the same thing somewhat more in particular ; it is to be noted that this reward or glory of heaven will comprehend in it self two parts or members ; the one call'd essential, belonging to the soul, the other term'd accidental, belonging to the body. The essential part consists in the vision or sight

First of the
body.

of God; as before you have heard, and afterwards shall be shew'd again. The accidental consists in the change and glorification of our flesh after the general Resurrection, whereby this corruptible body of ours will put on incorruption, as *St. Paul* says, and mortal, become im-

3 *Cor.* 15. mortal. All this flesh, I say, of ours, that now is so cumbersome, and grieves the mind, that now is invested with so many inconveniencies, subject to so many mutations, vex'd with so many diseases, defiled with so many corruptions, replenish'd with so many miseries and calamities, will then be made glorious and most perfect, to last for ever without change or mutation, and to reign with the soul everlastingly. And for this purpose, as * divines do prove, the same will be endow'd with certain excellent qualities and gifts from God, which *St. Anselm*, whom in this matter I will follow, does reckon to be seven; to wit, beauty, agility, fortitude, penetrability, health, pleasure, and perpetuity. All which excellencies either are wanting in the damn'd bodies, or else their contraries are found therein.

* See *St. Th.*
3. par. 9.
81. in sum-
pt. *Ansel-*
mus l. de
simil. c. 48.
& 49.
Seven pri-
vileges of
the glori-
fied bodies.

Mat 13.

And first of all, concerning the privilege and high excellency of beauty, how singular it will be in the glorified bodies, our Saviour himself in some part declares, when he says: *At that day shall the just shine as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.* A marvellous speech, and in human sense almost incredible, that our putrified bodies being raised, should shine and become as clear as the Sun; whereas on the contrary, the bodies of the damn'd will be as black, and ugly as filth itself. The second prerogative assign'd to the bodies of the just, is agility, or velocity whereby their flesh is deliver'd from all lumpish heaviness, wherewith it was incumber'd in this life, and made as light as the Angels themselves, which are spirits, and pass from place to place with infinite swiftness; as also descend and ascend of themselves, against the nature of corruptible bodies: whereas in the mean time, the damn'd bodies will be bound both hand and foot, not-
able once to move, as the Scripture expressly notes.

Mat. 22.

The

The third gift and quality is supernatural strength, *Mat. 25.* wherewith the glorified body will so abound, as *Anselm* says, that it will be able to move the whole earth; and on the contrary, the damn'd body will be so weak and impotent, that it will not be able to remove the very worms from its own face and eyes. The fourth quality is penetrability, or free power of passage, whereby the glorified body will be enabled to pierce and penetrate any other bodies whatsoever; as walls, doors, the earth or firmament, without any resistance, quite contrary to *John 20.* the nature of a corruptible body. So we see that Christ's Body glorified, after his Resurrection, enter'd the house where his Disciples were, the doors being shut, and penetrated also the heavens at his Ascension. The fifth quality, is most absolute health, whereby the glorified body will be deliver'd from all diseases and pains of this life, and from all troubles and incumbrances belonging to the same: as are, eating, drinking, sleeping and other like; and will be set in a most perfect and flourishing state of health and freedom, never decayable again. Whereas the damn'd bodies on the contrary, will be fill'd and wearied with innumerable pains and torments, which no tongue of man is able to express.

The sixth perfection is delight and pleasure, wherewith the glorified body above all measure, will be replenish'd, all its senses finding their peculiar and proper objects in much more excellency than ever they could in this world. Every part, sense, member and joint, will be fill'd with exceeding delectation and pleasure; as in the damn'd, each part and sense will be afflicted and tormented. I will allege *St. Anselm's* words, because they express unto us this matter most lively. "All
 " the whole glorified body, says he, will be fill'd with
 " abundance of all kind of comfort; the eyes, the
 " ears, the nose, the mouth, the hands, the throat,
 " the lungs, the heart, the stomach, the back, the
 " bones, the marrow, and the very entrails themselves,
 " and every part thereof, will be replenish'd with such
 " unspeakable

Ansel cap.
17. ubi
supra.

“ unspeakable sweetness and pleasure, that truly it may
 “ be said, that the whole man is made to drink of the
 “ river of God’s divine delights, and made drunk with
 “ the abundance of God’s house.” On the contrary,
 the damn’d body will be tormented in all its parts and
 members; each suffering in the same proportion, in
 which they were subservient to the soul in offending
 God.

Sep. 5.

The seventh and last excellency of a glorious body,
 is call’d perpetuity or security of life, whereby it is
 made assured never to die, or ever alter from its fe-
 licity; according to the saying of holy Scripture: *The
 just shall live for ever.* And this is one of the chief
 prerogatives and most excellent dignities of a glorified
 body, whereby all care, doubt, and fear, all danger of
 hurt and annoyance is taken away. For if all the world
 should fall together upon such a body, it could not
 hurt nor harm it any thing at all; whereas the damn’d
 body lies always dying, and is subject to the grief of
 every blow and torment laid upon it, and must remain
 so for all eternity.

These seven most excellent qualities, prerogatives,
 dignities, and pre-eminencies will adorn and beautify,
 the bodies of the just in the life to come. And altho’
 this universal happiness is but accidental, as I have said,
 and nothing if compared to the essential felicity of our
 soul: yet is it a matter of no small importance, as you
 see, but such, that if any body in this life had but the
 least part thereof, we should esteem him most happy.
 And to obtain so much in this world most men would
 use all their endeavours; whereas to get them altoge-
 ther in the life to come, no man almost will move his
 finger.

The second
 part of
 felicity,
 call’d es-
 sential, per-
 taining to
 the soul.

But now to leave this, and come to the most ex-
 cellent and essential point of this felicity, that is, to
 the part which pertains to the soul; it is to be under-
 stood, that altho’ there are many things that concur
 in this felicity, for the accomplishment and perfection
 of

of full happiness: yet the fountain of all is but one only thing, call'd by divines *Visio Dei beatifica*: the sight or vision of God that makes us happy. This only sight of God is our entire happiness, says St. *Austine*: which Christ also affirms when he says to his Father, *This is life everlasting, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* St. Paul also puts our felicity, *In seeing God face to face.* And St. *John*, *in seeing God as he is.* And the reason of all this, is, that all the pleasures and delights, of this world, wherein mortal men do solace themselves, being nothing else but little pieces and crumbs of God's incomprehensible felicity: the same are contain'd much more perfectly and excellently in God himself, from whom they are derived, than they are in their own natures imparted unto man; as all the perfections of God's creatures are more fully in him, than they are in them. Whence it follows, that whosoever is admitted to the vision and presence of almighty God, the Creator and fountain of all delights; will there find all the goodness and perfection of worldly things united together, and presented unto him at once. So that whatsoever may delight either body or soul, there he will enjoy it, all together, and with the presence thereof, will be ravish'd in all parts both of mind and body, in such sort, that he will not be able to imagine, think, or wish for any joy whatsoever, but there will find the same in its full perfection. There he will find all knowledge, all wisdom, all beauty, all riches, all nobility, all pleasure, and whatsoever besides may deserve either love or admiration, or causes any pleasure or satisfaction unto man.

All the powers of our mind will be fill'd with this sight, presence, and fruition of God: all the senses of our body will be satisfied and fully contented with the same. God will be the universal felicity of all his Saints; containing in himself alone all particular felicities, without end, number or measure. He will be

Aug. l. de Trin. c. 13

Joan. 17. Cor. 13.

How the vision of God will make men happy.

God to the saved shall be all in all.

light

light to our eyes, musick to our ears, honey to our mouths, most sweet and pleasant balm to our smell. He will be knowledge to our understanding, content to our will, continuation of eternity to our memory. In him we shall enjoy all the variety of things that delight us here; all the beauty of creatures that allure us here; all the pleasure and joys that content us here.

*Hug. l. 4.
de anima.*

c. 15.

Psalm 53.

Know-
ledge.

The great-
ness of joy
in Heaven.

“ In this vision of God, as *Hugo* says, we shall know,
“ we shall love, we shall rejoice, we shall praise. We
“ shall know the very secrets and judgments of God
“ which are a depth without bottom: as also the causes,
“ natures, beginnings, off-springs, and ends of all
“ creatures. We shall love incomparably, both God,
“ for the infinite causes of love that we see in him, and
“ our brethren, and companions, as much as our selves,
“ for that we shall see them as much loved by God as
“ our selves, and for the same cause for which we are
“ loved: whence ensues, that our joy will be without
“ measure; both because we shall have a particular joy
“ for every thing we love in God, which things are in-
“ finite; and also for that we shall rejoice, at the fe-
“ licity of every one of our brethren as much as at our
“ own: and by that means we shall have as many
“ distinct felicities, as we shall have distinct companions
“ in our felicity; who being without number, it is
“ no marvel that Christ said, Go into the joy of thy
“ Lord, and not, let thy Lord's joy enter into thee:
“ because no created heart can receive the fullness, and
“ greatness of this joy. And hereof finally it does
“ ensue, that we shall praise God without end or wear-
“ ness, with all our heart, with all our strength, with
“ all our powers, with all our parts, according to what
“ the Scripture says: Happy are they that live in thy
“ house, O Lord, for they will praise thee eternally
“ without end.” Hitherto this learned doctor.

Of this most blessed vision, sight, possession, and
fruition of almighty God, whereunto in heaven the
elect are admitted, the learned father *St. Austine* writes
thus:

thus: " Our Saviour in the Gospel said unto his
 " Disciples, Happy are the clean of heart, for they
 " shall see God. By which words we are let to under-
 " stand, that there is a sight and vision of God, which
 " is sufficient of it self to beatify men, and make them
 " happy. A vision which neither eye has seen in this
 " world, nor ear has heard, nor heart conceived. A
 " vision, dear brethren, that passes all the beauty of
 " earthly things; of gold, of silver, of woods, of fields,
 " of sea, of air, of sun, of moon, of stars, of Angels:
 " because all these things have their beauty from thence.
 " We shall see him face to face, says his Apostle, and
 " we shall know him as we are known. That is, we
 " shall know the power of the Father, we shall know the
 " wisdom of the Son, we shall know the goodness of
 " the Holy Ghost, we shall know the indivisible nature
 " of the Blessed Trinity. And this very seeing of the
 " face of God, is the joy of Angels, and of all other
 " Saints and celestial Spirits in Heaven. This is the
 " reward of life everlasting; this is the glory of all
 " blessed Cherubims; their everlasting pleasure; their
 " crown of honour; their term of felicity; their rich
 " repose; their beautiful quietness; their inward and
 " outward consolation; their divine paradise; their
 " heavenly *Jerusalem*; their happiness of life; their
 " fulness of bliss; their eternal triumph; their precious
 " peace of God, which passes all understanding. The
 " sight of God is the full beatitude, the total glorifica-
 " tion of men and Angels: to see and behold him, I
 " say, that made both heaven and earth; to see and
 " behold him, dear brother, that made thee, that
 " glorified thee. For in seeing him, thou wilt know
 " him; in knowing him, thou wilt love him; in
 " loving him, thou wilt possess him; in possessing
 " him, thou wilt praise him; and in praising him,
 " thou wilt spend thy whole eternity. For he is the
 " inheritance of his people, he is the possession of their
 " felicity, he is the reward of their expectation. I will
 " be

The speech
 of St. Au-
 fine touch-
 ing the
 vision of
 God.

Tract. 4.
in en poan
& 36.
soliloq.
Mat. 5.
1 Cor. 3.
1 Cor. 13.

Phil. 5.

- Gen.* 11. “ be thy great reward, said he to *Abraham*, O Lord, thou
 “ art great, and therefore no marvel, if thou be a great
 “ reward. The sight of thee therefore is all our reward
John 17. “ all our joy and felicity that we expect: seeing thou
 “ hast said, that this is life everlasting, to see and know
 “ thee our true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast
 “ sent.” Thus utter’d *St. Austine* his feeling in these affairs.

S E C T. IV.

Of circumstances increasing the joys of Heaven.

*St. Au-
stine's ap-
prehension
of the joys
of Heaven.*

AND now having thus declared the two general parts of the heavenly felicity, the one appertaining to our soul, the other to our body ; it is not hard to esteem what excess of joy both of them join'd together, will work in us, at the most happy day of our glorification. Which the foresaid holy *St. Austine* conceived and express'd in these most zealous and affectuous words :

“ O joy above all joys, and without which there is
 “ no joy, when shall I enjoy thee, to see my God that
 “ dwells in thee? O everlasting kingdom! O king-
 “ dom of all eternity! O light without end! O peace of
 “ God that passes all understanding, wherein the souls of
 “ Saints do rest with thee, O Lord; and everlasting
 “ joy is upon their heads, and they do possess joy and
 “ exultation, and all pain and sorrow is fled from them.
 “ O how glorious a kingdom is thine, O Lord, where-
 “ in all Saints reign with thee, adorn'd with light, as
 “ with precious apparel, and have crowns of precious
 “ stones upon their heads! O kingdom of everlasting
 “ bliss, where thou art present, O Lord, the hope of
 “ all Saints, and the diadem of their everlasting glory,
 “ replenishing them with joy on every side by thy blest
 “ sight! O Lord in this kingdom of thine, there is
 “ infinite joy, and mirth without sadness; health with-
 “ out sorrow; life without labour; light without dark-
 “ ness; felicity without abatement; all goodness with-
 “ out evil. Here youth flourishes that never grows old;
 “ life

“ life that knows no end ; beauty that never fades ; love
 “ that never cools ; health that never diminishes ; joy
 “ that never ceases. Here sorrow is never felt, com-
 “ plaint is never heard, matter of sadness is never seen,
 “ nor evil success is ever fear’d. For that they possess
 “ thee, O Lord, who art the perfection and crown of
 “ their felicity.” Hitherto blessed St. *Austine*.

And now, Christian brother, if we that live in these days, and read these things would enter seriously into these considerations, as this holy man, and others did, no doubt, but we should be more inflamed with the love of this heavenly felicity prepared for us, than we are ; and consequently, should strive more to gain it, than, alas, we do. And to the end thou mayst conceive some more feeling in the matter, consider but a little with me, what a joyful day will that be at thy house, when having lived in the fear of God, and finish’d in his service the end of thy peregrination ; thou shalt come, by the means of death, to pass from misery and labour, to the life of immortality ; and in that passage, when other men begin to fear, thou shalt lift up thy head in hope, according to thy Saviour’s promise : for that the time of thy salvation comes on. Tell me, I say, what a day of joy will that be to thee, when thy soul stepping forth of prison, and conducted by the Angels to the tabernacle of heaven, will be received there with the honourable companies and troops of that place ? with all those hierarchies of blessed spirits that are mention’d in Scripture : as *Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Angels, Archangels, Cherubims, and Seraphims* : with the holy *Apostles and Disciples* of Christ ; with *Patriarchs, Prophets, Martyrs, Virgins, Innocents, Confessors, holy Bishops, Priests, and other Saints* of God ? all who as they did rejoice at thy conversion from sin : so will they triumph now at thy coronation and glorification. What joy and jubilee will thy soul receive at that day, dear brother, when she shall be presented by her good
 Angel

Of the joy-
 ful mutati-
 on at a just
 man’s
 death.

Luke 21 :

Ephes. 1 :

Col. 1.

1 Thes. 1 :

Isaiah 61.

Luke 15.

Angel, in the presence of all the princely states, before the seat and majesty of the Blessed Trinity, with recital and declaration of all thy good works done, and labours suffer'd for the love and service of almighty God; when, I say, those blessed spirits will lay down in that honourable consistory all thy virtuous acts, with their particularities: all thy alms-deeds, all thy prayers, all thy fastings, all the innocencies of thy life, all thy patience in bearing injuries, all thy constancy in adversities, all thy temperance in meats and drink, all the virtues of thy whole life: when all, I say, will be recounted there, all commended, all rewarded? And wilt thou not see the value and profit of living virtuously? wilt thou not confess from the bottom of thy heart, that the service of God is gainful, and honourable? wilt thou not be most joyful, and bless the hour ten thousand times, wherein first thou resolv'dst thy self to leave the slavery of this miserable world, to serve only so bountiful a Lord? shalt thou not think thy self now beholden most deeply to him, or her, that perswaded thee first to take this resolution?

But moreover; when thou wilt look about thee, and consider into what a port and haven of security thou art arrived, and wilt cast back thy eyes upon the danger which thou hast pass'd, and wherein other men are yet in hazard, the cause of thy joy will greatly be increased. For thou wilt see evidently, how often thou wert in danger of perishing in that journey, if God had not held his special hand over thee. Thou wilt see the dangers wherein other men are; the death and damnation whereinto many of thy friends and acquaintance have fallen; the eternal pains of hell, incurr'd by many that used to laugh and be merry with the world. All which will augment the unspeakable felicity of this thy so fortunate lot. And for thy self, thou mayst be secure, thou art out of all danger for ever and ever. There is no more need now of fear, of watch, of labour, or of care. Thou mayst
now

now lay down all armour, 'as the children of *Israel* did, when they came into the land of promise, for there is no more enemy to assail thee; there is no more wily serpent to beguile thee: all is peace, all is security. *St. Paul* has no more need now to fast, to watch, or to punish his body: holy *St. Hierome* may now cease to afflict himself both night and day to conquer his spiritual enemy. Thy only exercise must be to rejoice and triumph, and to sing *Allelujah* to the Lamb, who has brought thee to this felicity, and will continue thee therein for an everlasting eternity.

1 Cor. 9.

Hierom.
Ep. 22.
ad *Eusio.*

O dear Christian, and most loving brother! what excessive joy and comfort will it be at that day to see that holy Lamb sitting in majesty upon his seat of state? if three wise men of the East came so far, and so rejoiced to see him lying in a manger: what will it be to see him now triumphing in his glory? if *St. John Baptist* in his mother's womb did leap at his approaching towards him; what will his presence do in this his royal and eternal kingdom? "It surpasses all other joy and glory, that Saints have in heaven, says blessed *St. Austine*, to be admitted to the inestimable sight of Christ's face, and to receive the beams of glory from the splendor of his majesty. And if we were to suffer torments every day, yea, to tolerate the very pains of hell for a time, thereby to gain the sight of Christ in heaven, and to be join'd in glory to the number of Saints: it were nothing in respect of the worth of the reward." O that we made such account of this matter, as this holy and learned man did! we should not live as we do, nor lose the same for such vain trifles as most men in the world do daily.

The seeing
of Christ in
glorified
flesh.

Mat. 2.

Luke 1.

Serm. 37.
De Sanctis.

But to go forward in this consideration. Imagine besides all this that hitherto has been said, what a joy it will be to thy soul at that day, to meet with her friends in the kingdom of heaven; with father, with

Meeting
with our
friends in
heaven.

C c

mother,

mother, with brethren, with sisters, with wife, with husband, with masters, with scholars, with neighbours, with kindred, with acquaintance; imagine the welcomes, the mirth, the sweet embraces, that will be there; the inestimable joy whereof, the holy ancient martyr and blessed Father St. *Cyprian* expresses in these words:

The
saying of
St. *Cyprian*
an l. de
mortali in
fine.

“ Who is there in peregrination abroad, says he,
“ that rejoices not exceedingly at the very thought of
“ his return to his friends and country: O dear brethren! heaven is our country, and the inhabitants
“ of that place are our friends, and kinsfolks: why
“ make we no more haste to salute and embrace them?
“ An infinite multitude of our parents, brethren,
“ children and acquaintance do expect us in heaven:
“ what a joy will it be both to them and us, to meet
“ and solace our selves together? how inestimable
“ will the delight of those heavenly kingdoms be,
“ and how extream the felicity, where eternity of life,
“ will be void of all fear of death? ” thus far St. *Cyprian*: adding further a most vehement exhortation to encourage us to hasten to the attaining this happiness.

This then will be a most incomprehensible joy. But yet further, add to this the triumphant exultation that daily will be in that place at the fresh arrival of new brethren and sisters coming thither from time to time, with the spoils of their enemies conquer'd and vanquish'd in this world: O what a comfortable sight will it be, to see those seats of fallen Angels fill'd again with our fellow creatures? To see the crowns of glory set upon their heads, and that in all variety, according to the infinite variety of their combat and conquests? One for martyrdom, or confessing Christ before the persecutor; another for virginity or chastity, by which he overcome the allurements of the flesh; another for poverty or humility by which he triumph'd over the vanities of the world; another for many victories over the devil? “ There the glorious choir of Apostles says the foresaid St. *Cyprian*,
“ there

The daily
arrival of
new brethren
to heaven.
2 *Tit. 4.*
Apoc. 2.
3. 4.

“ there the number of rejoicing Prophets, there the
 “ innumerable multitude of holy martyrs will receive *Lib. de mortal.*
 “ the crowns of their deaths and sufferings. There
 “ triumphing virgins, who have overcome concupi-
 “ scence with the strength of continency; there the
 “ alms-givers, who have liberally fed the poor, and
 “ according to our Lord’s commandment, have made
 “ over their earthly riches to the store-house of hea-
 “ ven, will receive their due and peculiar reward? *

So he. O how will virtue shew her self at this day! how will good deeds bring content to those that perform them. And among all other joys and satisfactions, this will not be the least, to see how poor souls that come thither either from the pains and miseries of this life, or from the torments of the purging fire, will be ravish’d, remain astonish’d, and as it were, besides themselves at the sudden mutation, and excessive honour done them.

If a poor afflicted man that was out of his way, wandering alone in a deep, miry, and dirty lane, in the midst of a dark and tempestuous night, far from any company, and destitute of money, beaten with rain, terrified with thunder, stiff with cold, wearied out with labour, almost famish’d with hunger and thirst, and near brought to despair with a multitude of miseries; should upon the sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, be taken out of that affliction, and placed in a goodly large and rich palace, furnish’d with clear light, comfortable sweet favours, dainty meats, soft beds, pleasant musick, delicate apparel, and honourable company, all prepared for him alone; and all attending his coming, receive and embrace him, serve and honour him, crown him king for ever: what would this poor man think? how would he look? what would he say? surely he would be able to say little; but rather breaking forth into tears, would for joy remain mute and dumb, his heart being not able to contain

A simili-
tude ex-
pressing
the sudden
joy of the
just after
their de-
parture.

the sudden and exceeding greatness of so inestimable comfort.

So, dear brother, it will be, and much more with these twice happy souls, that come to heaven from the troubles of this life. For never was there cool shadow so pleasant in a hot sunny-day; nor the spring to the poor traveller in his greatest thirst; nor the repose of an easy bed to the wearied servant after his labour: as this rest of heaven will be to an afflicted soul who comes thither. O that we could conceive this! that we could imprint this in our hearts, that we had a feeling of this which I say; should we follow vanities as we do? should we neglect this matter as we do? no doubt, but that our coldness in purchasing these joys, proceeds from the small opinion we conceive of them. For if we made such account and estimate of this jewel of heavenly bliss, as other merchants before us more skilful and wiser than our selves, have done, we should bid for it as they did, or at least should not let pass so negligently, what they sought after so carefully.

The value
of heaven
and the ac-
count that
old Saints
made
thereof.

Heb. 22.

St. Paul says of our Saviour, *Proposito sibi gaudio sustinuit crucem*: He laying before his eyes the joys of heaven, sustain'd the cross. A great estimation of the happiness he would buy at so dear a rate. But what counsel gives he to other men about the same?

Mat. 13.

surely no other, *Than to go and sell all they have, to purchase this treasure.* What says St. Paul of him-

Phil. 3.

self? verily, that *he esteem'd all the world as dung* in respect of the purchasing of this jewel. What does

Hierom. in
catal.

St. Paul's scholar *Ignatius*, bid for it? hear his words:
"Fire, gallows, beasts, breaking of my bones, quar-
tering of my members, crushing of my body, all the
torments of the devil together, let them come upon

Serm. 31.
De Sanctis.

"me, so I may enjoy this treasure of heaven." What
does St. *Austine*, that learned father, offer? you have just
now heard, that he would be content to suffer torments
every day, yea, the very torments of hell it self, to gain

37.

this

this joy. Good Lord, how far did these holy Saints differ from us? how contrary were their judgments to ours in these affairs: who will now marvel that the world is judged folly by almighty God, and that the wisdom of God is judged folly by the world? O ^{1 Cor. 1.} ^{2 & 3.} *children of men*, says the Prophet, *why do ye love vanity, Psalm 4.* and seek after a lye? why do ye embrace straw, and condemn gold? straw, I say, and most vile chaff, and such as finally will set your own houses on fire, and be your ruin and eternal perdition?

S E C T. V.

*To what a Christian is regenerated in baptism.
With a conclusion of this first part, containing
motives to resolution.*

BUT now to draw towards an end of this matter, tho' there be no end of the thing it self, let the careful Christian consider to what he is born, and what he may be, if he will. He is born heir apparent to a kingdom without end; a kingdom void of limitation; a kingdom of eternal bliss; the kingdom of almighty God himself. He is born to be joint-heir with Jesus Christ the Son of God to reign with him, to triumph with him; to sit in judgment, in majesty with him; to judge the very Angels of heaven with him. What greater glory can be imagined, except that of God himself? all the joys, all the riches, all the glory that heaven contains, will be pour'd forth to make him happy. And to make this honour, and triumph yet greater, the glorious Lamb that sits upon the throne of majesty, more shining than the precious diamond; from whose seat there proceeds thunder and lightning without end; and at whose feet the four and twenty elders lay down their crowns: this Lamb, I say,

this glorious God and Man, will himself honour him and minister unto him. Who then would not esteem this royal inheritance? who would not make greater account thereof than we do? especially seeing the gaining and winning of the same is now, by the benefit of our redemption, and grace purchased thereby, brought to be in our own hands? according to the express words

Mat. 11. of our Saviour, saying: *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away.* That is to

say, by the force of God's covenant made with Christians, they that live virtuously will obtain the same; and whatsoever Christian leads this virtuous life, takes heaven, as it were, by force and by violence. "The

Serm. 17.
De Sanctis. "matter is put in the power of the doer, says St. Au-

"*gustine*, for the kingdom of heaven suffers violence.

"This thing, O man, that is the kingdom of hea-

"ven, requires no other price but thy self: it is so

"much worth, as thou art worth; give thy self, and

"and thou shalt have it." By which he signifies, that

every man, how poor or needy soever he is in this world, may gain this inheritance to himself; may make

himself a prince, a king, an emperor, if he will;

even the meanest and most miserable man, I say, upon

earth. O most wonderful bounty and liberality of

our Saviour! O princely heart and unspeakable mercy!

O incredible prodigality, as I may say, of treasures

so inestimable as the most infinite and endless riches of

heaven.

Tell me now, gentle reader, and most loving and

dear brother, why wilt thou not accept of this offer

of thy Saviour? why wilt thou not make account of

this kingdom? why wilt thou not buy this endless

glory of him, for so little labour as he requires for it? hear how earnestly he persuades thee to bargain with

him: I do give thee counsel to buy of me pure and

tried gold, to the end thou mayst be rich. Why

wilt thou not follow this counsel, of one that means

not

The buy-
ing of hea-
ven.

Apoc. 3.

not to deceive thee? nothing can grieve this thy Saviour more, than that men will seek with such pains to buy straw and chaff in *Ægypt*, whereas he would sell them fine gold at a lower price at home: and that they will needs purchase puddle-water with more labour and cost, than he would require for ten times as much pure liquor, out of the very fountain of life it self. There is not the wickedest man that lives in the world, but takes more pains to go to hell, as will be declared more largely hereafter, than the most laborious servant of God does in purchasing heaven and eternal bliss. O folly! O madness!

Follow not then, this fantastical frenzy of earthly wisdom, make not your self partaker of their error. For the day will come when you will see them do heavy penance for their folly; at what time your heart will be truly joyful, that you had never any part or portion among them. Let them go now and bestow their time in transitory vanities, in sinful pleasures and delights of this world; let them now build their pleasant palaces, let them purchase dignities, hoard up money, and buy a little earth: let them hunt after honours, and frame castles in the air; the time will come ere long, if you believe Christ himself, wherein you will have small cause to envy their felicity. If they do think and talk basely now of the glory and riches of God and of his Saints in heaven; not esteeming them in comparison of their own, or contemning them rather, because carnal pleasures are not found there: make little account of their words; *for the sensual man understands not the things which are of God.* If horses were promised by their masters a good feast and banquet, most evident it is, that they could imagine nothing else but provender and water to be their best cheer, for they have no knowledge of dantier dishes: so fares it with these men, who being accustom'd only to carnal pleasures can mount with their minds no higher than to brutish sensu-

The folly
of seeking
worldly
vanities.

¹ Cor. 2.

fuality. But I have shew'd to thee before, gentle reader, some ways and considerations to conceive greater matters; altho', as I have advertised thee often, we must confess still with *St. Paul* that no human heart can conceive the least part thereof. For which cause
 1 *Cor.* 2. also, it is not unlike that *St. Paul*, himself was forbid
 2 *Cor.* 12. to utter the things which he had seen and heard, in his most wonderful miraculous assumption to the third heaven.

The conclusion-
with the
applicati-
on of all
that has
been said.

Wherefore to conclude at length this whole chapter, you have to consider, dear and loving brother, that this heavenly bliss, which hitherto I have endeavour'd to describe unto you, is only for them that will strive for it, as *St. Paul* well notes; and no man is crown'd in this glory *but such only as will fight for it*, according as the same Apostle does teach and forwarn us; for not every one that says to Christ, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but they only who do the will of Christ's eternal Father who is in heaven. And altho' this kingdom of Christ is set out to all men; yet every man will not arrive to reign with Christ; but such only as will be content to suffer with Christ. Tho' the kingdom of heaven is subject to violence, as has been said, yet no man can enter there by force, but he only whose good deeds will follow him to open the gates: that is, *who enters* as the Prophet says, *without spot, and has wrought justice*.
 Psalm 14. My meaning then is, that as I have shew'd the exceeding greatness and worth of this treasure, gentle reader, so you being a Christian, should also conceive the right way of gaining the same; which is no other by the testimony of Christ himself, than only by a holy and virtuous life, in keeping his commandments. You are therefore to sit down and consider, according to our Saviour's counsel, what you will do and determine herein; whether you have so much spiritual money, as is sufficient to build this tower, and to make this heavenly

heavenly war or no ; that is, whether you have so much good-will and courage in you, as to live the virtuous life required for the gaining of this eternal kingdom. This is the question, this is the principal point, this is the whole issue of all the matter. And whatsoever has been spoken in this book before, either of your Creator and creation ; of your particular end ; of the majesty, bounty, and justice of your God and Saviour ; as also of the account he will demand of you, and of the punishments or rewards reserved for the life to come ; has been meant by me, to this only end and purpose, that considering all that has been said, you should finally resolve what to do, and not pass over your time in careless negligence, as many are accustomed to do, never seeing their own errors, till it be too late to mend them. The final end of all that has been said.

For the love of God then, dear Christian, and for the love you bear to your own soul and eternal welfare, shake off this most dangerous security, wherein flesh and blood is wont to lull the careless people of this world. Make some earnest resolution to secure your state in the life to come. Recall to mind oftentimes, that this is the moment whereon depends all eternity of bliss, or wo hereafter. If it be but a moment, and yet a moment of so great consequence and importance ; how is it pass'd over by earthly men with so little care and thought ! what reason may be alleged for your so dangerous negligence ? what cause may be assign'd for so extream a folly ? all the creatures of earth, heaven, and hell, even from the very first to the last if you examine them all, may be arguments and motives unto you, to leave this perillous course wherein you are : all are, or may be books, or lessons, and sermons to you, preaching and protesting, some by their punishment, some by their glory, some by their beauty, and all by their creation, that you ought without delay, to make resolutions of another kind of life ; and that all An exhortation.
A saying to be remembered.
is

is vanity, all is folly, all is iniquity, all is misery, except only to serve your Lord and Maker. And so with this, will I make an end of this first part, reserving some other things to be spoken of in the second, for the removing of such impediments, as our spiritual adversary is wont to lay against this good work of resolution, as against the first step and degree to our salvation. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who was content to shed his own precious blood to purchase this noble inheritance of his kingdom for us; give us his holy grace, to esteem it, as the importance of the matter requires, and not to lose our title thereunto by our own neglect.

The End of the First Part.





T H E

SECOND *Part of this Book*;

Which treats of the obstacles and impediments that hinder RESOLUTION; and how they may be removed.

The A R G U M E N T.



IN the former part of this book there have been laid down sundry reasons and considerations, whereby to stir up men to a firm resolution of serving God; and, if the nature of virtue which in it self is so amiable, was to be consider'd, they would undoubtedly be sufficient to that effect, were not the subtilties of our spiritual enemy very great and dangerous in this behalf, and his endeavours most diligent against our purpose. For so it fares, that when he sees that the judgment of man is convinced by the former reasons and demonstrations, and that it can no longer resist or deny, but that the only true wisdom is to break off from the vanities and sinful life of this world, and to betake our selves to the most honourable and advantageous service of almighty God, then this infernal foe being not able further to delude our judgment, or to blind our understanding, employs himself by all means possible to hinder us from following our own judgment;

The subtilty of the devil.

judgment; alledging either the difficulty of obtaining pardon, or the pains and hardship of a virtuous life, or the loss of worldly honours and earthly commodities, or some other such like fraud and trifle: whereby to hinder our resolution, or at least to defer it so long that he may hope, we shall never make it afterwards to our gain or comfort.

To prevent this malicious and most perilous endeavour of our ghostly adversary, this second part is adjoin'd, containing the chief and principal impediments that usually do rise against resolution, either out of our own corrupt nature, or infirmity, or suggested by our mortal foe: the removal and confutation of which obstacles and impediments, will bring no small light, I hope, to the studious reader, for the true understanding of both his own state, and the deceits and illusions used by his said enemies. Read then this part also, dear Christian brother, with no less diligence than the former: for the profit thereof will be equal, and your content perhaps far greater, in respect of the variety of matters handled therein, and of the manifold comforts which your soul in perusing the same, will thereby receive.





A

CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY.

P A R T. II.

CHAP. I.

Of the first impediment that hinders sinners from resolution ; which is mistrust and diffidence in God's mercy, by reason of the multitude and grievousness of their offences.



AMONG all other grievous and most perillous thoughts, which in this world are accustom'd to offer themselves to a mind entangled and loaden with great sins, this usually is the first (through the nature of sin it self, and crafty suggestions of our ghostly enemy) to fall into distrust and despair of God's mercy. Such was the thought of the most unhappy *Cain*, one of the first inhabitants of mankind upon earth ; who after the murder of his own brother, and other sins by him committed, burst forth into that horrible and desperate speech, so greatly offensive to his Lord and Maker : *My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon.* Such was, in like manner, the desperate conceit of wicked *Judas*, one of the first of them that were chosen to the particular service of our Redeemer ; who seeing his conscience oppress'd with

Despair an
ordinary
temptation
to great
sinners.

*Cain.
Gen. 4.*

with manifold enormous iniquities, and most of all with the betraying of his own Lord and Master; took no other way of amendment or redress, but to destroy himself both in body and soul; saying only those words full of miserable distrust and despair: *I have*

Mark 27. *sinn'd in betraying just blood*, not asking forgiveness, nor hoping for pardon. By which words, and his most wretched end, he more grievously offended and injured his most loving and merciful Saviour, than by all his former iniquities committed against him.

The Ship-
wreck of
souls over-
laden with
sins.

This then, is the first and greatest rock, on which a sinful soul over burthen'd with the charge of her iniquities, and toss'd in the waves of despairing thoughts, by the blasts and storms of God's threats against sinners, does commonly lose herself. This is the most horrible depth and dungeon, whereof the holy Scripture says:

Prov. 18. *The impious, when he shall come into the depth of sins, contemns.* This is that incurable wound of which God almighty speaks by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, when he says,

Jere. 30. *thy wound is incurable, thy stripe is very sore.*

The mi-
sery of def-
peration.

This is that great and main impediment that stops the conduits of God's holy grace from flowing into the soul of a sinful man. This is the knife that cuts in sunder all those heavenly blessed cords, wherewith our sweet Lord and Saviour endeavours to draw to repentance the hearts of sinners, saying by his Prophet: *I*

Hosea 11. *will draw them in the bands of charity.* For by this means every sinful conscience comes to almighty God, as did *Jerusalem*, when being admonish'd of her sins, and exhorted by his Prophet to amendment of life; she said, I am become desperate, I will never think of any such thing. To which lamentable state, when a sinful man is once arrived; the next step he takes, is to ingulf himself into the depth of all detestable enormities, and to abandon his soul to the very sink of all filth and abominations, according as St. *Paul* said of the

Jere. 2.

Ephes. 4.
Rom. 1.

Gentiles in like case: *Who despairing have given up themselves to impudicity unto the operation of all uncleanness.*

Which

Which desperate resolution of the impious, is the thing, as I have noted before, that most of all other offences upon earth, exasperates the indignation of almighty God, depriving his divine majesty of that most excellent property, wherein he chiefly delights and glories, which is his infinite and unspeakable mercy. This might be declared by divers examples of holy Writ; tho' two will suffice at present. The first is, of the people of *Israel*, not long before their banishment into *Babylon*; who being threaten'd from God by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, that manifold punishments were impendent over their heads, for the grievous sins committed by them against his majesty, began, instead of repentance, to fall into despair, and consequently resolved to take that impious course of a dissolute life, alleged before out of *St. Paul*. For thus they answer'd God who exhorted them by his threats to reform their wicked lives: *We are desperate, for we will go after our cogitations, and we will do every one the perversity of his evil heart.* Whereat God was infinitely incensed, and broke forth into this vehement interrogation: *Interrogate Gentes: quis audivit talia horribilia?* Ask and enquire of the very *Gentiles*, whether ever among them were heard any such horrible blasphemies? And after this, to express more emphatically the intolerable injury herein offer'd to his majesty, he commanded the Prophet *Jeremiah* to go forth of his own house, to a potter's shop, who was framing his vessels upon the wheel. Which *Jeremiah* having done, he saw before his face a pot crush'd and broke all in peices upon the wheel by the potter, and thinking thereby that the vessel had been altogether unprofitable, and to be cast away; he saw the same clay presently fram'd again by the potter, into a new vessel more excellent than before. Whereat God said unto him, *Why, shall I not be able to do unto you, as this potter, O house of Israel? behold says our Lord, as clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. I will*

The thing wherein God most delights is mercy.

Jere. 18.

A desperate resolution.

A marvelous example of God's clemency. *Ibid.*

will suddenly speak against nation and against kingdom to root out, and destroy and waste it. If that nation shall repent them of their evil, against whom I have spoken : I also will repent me of the evil, that I have thought to do to it. And then he proceeds forward, declaring unto *Jeremiah* the exceeding grief and indignation which he conceives, that any sinner whatsoever, should despair of mercy and pardon at his hands.

Another
example of
God's
wonderful
mercy.

Ezek. 33.

The second example is of the same people of *Israel* during the time of their banishment in *Babylon*, at which time being afflicted with many miseries for their sins, and threaten'd with many more to come, because they changed not the course of their former wicked conversation : they began to despair of God's mercy, and to say to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, that lived banish'd among them, and exhorted them to amendment, upon assured hope of God's favour towards them : *Our iniquities and our sins are upon us, and in them we fade away ; how then can we live ?* at which thought God greatly moved, spake thus by *Ezekiel*. *Live I, says our Lord God, I will not the death of the impious, but that the impious convert from his way and live --- Why will ye die, O house of Israel ?* and then he makes a large and vehement protestation, that how grievously soever any person offends him, and how great punishments soever he denounces against him ; nay, if he had given express sentence of death and damnation upon him : yet, if he repent himself of his sin, and exercise * judgment and justice for the time to come : all his sins that he has committed shall be forgiven him, because he has done judgment and justice.

* Judgment and justice to be used in true repentance ; that is judgment upon our selves and justice to others.

And this might be sufficient, altho' nothing else were said, to remove this first obstacle and impediment of true resolution, which is to despair of God's infinite goodness and mercy. Nevertheless, for a more evident clearing and demonstration of this matter, and for the greater comfort of such as feel themselves burthen'd with the heavy weight of their iniquities, committed against

against his divine majesty : I have thought expedient in this place to declare more at large this abundant subject of God's mercy towards all such as will truly return to him ; in what time, state and condition or age soever in this life ; which shall be shew'd and set down by these four points and parts that follow.

S E C T. I.

What manner of love God bears to man.

FIRST of all then, this endless mercy may be comprehended by the infinite and incomprehensible love that almighty God bears man ; which love is always the mother of favour, grace, and mercy. If you demand of me in what sort I prove that the love of God is so exceeding great towards man : I answer, as the cosmographer is wont to do, who by the greatness and multitude of the streams and rivers, frames a conjecture of the fountain from which they flow. The proper rivers which are derived and run forth of love, are favours and benefits ; which being infinite, endless, and inestimable, bestow'd by God on man (as in another place has been declared, and the whole universal frame of this world does abundantly witness) it follows most evidently, that the origin, fountain, and spring of all these favours, graces and good turns, must needs be infinite and immeasurable, and far surpassing all compass of man's understanding.

If you require of me the cause and reason, why almighty God should so wonderfully be affected towards man ; I can directly yield none at all, but rather marvel with holy *Job*, why so sovereign a majesty should *Job 7.* set his heart upon so base a subject. Notwithstanding, the holy Scripture seems to allege one principal reason of this love, where it is said, thou, O Lord, canst not hate *Sap. 11.* those things which thou hast made, but dost use mercy towards all, because they are thine. And the like manner

Ezek- 18.
The first
cause why
God loves
us, for that
he is our
Creator,
and we are
his own
works.

of reasoning God uses himself, when he says by his Prophet *Ezekiel*: *Behold, all souls are mine*: and hereupon he infers a little after: Can I have then the will to damn a wicked man, seeing that his soul is mine, created and redeemed by me? as tho' he would say, this would be against all order and equity. And the reason of this manner of speech and argument, is, because every man naturally is inclined to love the things that are of his own making. So we see, that if a man has an orchard wherein he has great variety of trees and plants, yet if there be but one of his own peculiar grafting, that flourishes and prospers well, he takes more delight therein, than in any of the rest, because it is his own workmanship. So in like manner, if a man has a vineyard of his own planting and trimming. For which respect the holy Prophet *David* finding himself and the whole kingdom of *Jury* in great affliction and calamity, thought no other means so forcible to draw God to compassion, and commiseration of their case, as to cry out to him in this manner,

Psalms 79. Thou who governeest *Israel*, look towards us, and be attentive: thou hast brought forth a vineyard out of *Aegypt*, thou hast purged the same from *Gentiles*, and hast planted it. Thou, O God of all power, turn towards us, look upon us from heaven, and visit this thy vineyard which thy own right hand has planted. The holy Prophet *Isaiah* used the like manner of persuasion to move God, when he said,
Isaiah 64. Lord, thou art our Father, and we clay: and thou art our Maker, and we the works of thy hands.

Job 10. But above all others, the blessed man *Job* stands, as it were, disputing with God about this matter, saying, Have not thy hands made me? have they not fram'd me of clay and earth? hast not thou compacted me as cheese is made of milk? hast thou not knit my bones and sinews together, and cover'd my flesh with skin? hast not thou given me life, and conserved my spirit, with thy continual protection? howsoever thou seemest

The confidence of
Job in that
God had
made him.

seemest to dissemble these matters and hide them in thy heart, yet I know that thou remembrest them all, and art not unmindful of them. By which words this holy man signified, that altho' God suffer'd him to be tempted and afflicted in this life, so that he might seem to have forgotten him; yet he was well assured that his divine majesty could not forsake or despise him, because he was his creature, and the work of his own hands. In which very name of workmanship, holy *David* took so great comfort, considering that the workman cannot chuse but be favourable to his own work, (especially so excellent and bountiful a workman as almighty God is, towards a work made to his own figure and likeness) that in all his necessities, nay, even in his greatest infirmities of flesh, and most grievous offences committed against his majesty, he conceives most assured hope of mercy and pardon, upon this consideration: *That he was his workmanship*; and consequently, that it was well known to his divine wisdom, of how brittle and infirm a metal he was made. For thus once he particularly reasons upon this matter: Look how far distant the East is from the West, so far off has God removed our iniquities from us. Even as a father takes compassion of his own children, so does our Lord take mercy upon us: for he well knows the mould whereof we are made, and remembers that we are nothing else but dust:

The assured hope *David* had in this, that he was God's workmanship.

Psalms 102.

In which discourse the holy Prophet makes mention of two things that did assure him of God's mercy; the one, that God was his Creator and Maker, and thereby privy to the frailty of his constitution and nature: the other, that he was a Father, whose property is to have compassion on his children: and this is a second reason, more strong and forcible perhaps than the former, why every man may be assured of pardon, that heartily turns to almighty God; considering that it has pleased his divine majesty, not only to be Creator of man, as he is of all other things, but

The second reason of assurance of God's love, because he is our Father.

also a Father, which is a title of the greatest love and union that nature has left to things in this world. Whereof a certain philosopher said well, that no man could conceive the love of a parent's heart but he only that had a child of his own. For which respect our Saviour *JESUS*, to put us in mind of this most fervent love, and thereby as it were, by one fire to kindle another within our hearts, used oftentimes and ordinarily to repeat this sweet name of Father, in his speeches to his followers, and thereupon founded divers most excellent and comfortable discourses; as once when he dissuaded them from over much care and worldly solicitude, he adds this reason: *Your Father in heaven knows that you have need of these things*: as if he should say, he knowing your wants and being your Father, you need not trouble your selves with great anxiety in these matters: for a father's heart cannot but be provident and careful for his children. He makes the like deduction in the same place, to the same effect, by comparison of the birds in the air, and other irrational creatures. For which, if God makes, says he, so abundant provision, as all the whole world may witness that he does; much more careful will he be to provide for men that are his own children, which are more dear to him than any other created terrestrial thing.

What a Father God is.

All which speeches and reasons of our Saviour, are derived from the nature and property of a parent, who cannot but affect and love his children; especially such a Father whom Christ calls celestial, who in this perfection of true fatherly love, as far exceeds all earthly parents; as in power, clemency, and goodness, almighty God surpasses the infirmity of his feeble creatures. Such a Father, as has not only given life and being to his children; but also, as *St. Paul* says, has pour'd into their hearts the divine spirit of his only eternal Son, stirring them up to most assured confidence and invincible hope in his fatherly goodness and

Gal. 4.

and protection. And upon assurance of this hope, sinners as well as Saints have from the beginning, fled to him confidently under this title of Paternity and Fatherhood, and never were deceived. So the Prophet *Isaiab*, as well in his own name, as in the name of the sinful people of *Israel*, doubted not to cry: *Thou art our Father*; *Abraham has not known us, and Israel has been ignorant of us. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, from the beginning is thy name.* And to confirm this assurance unto us, Christ sent that most sweet and comfortable ambassage to his Disciples, presently upon his Resurrection; *Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father; my God, and your God.* By which two words of Father and God, the one of love, and the other of power; the one of infinite good-will, the other of endless ability, he took away from each man that should have recourse to this merciful Lord and Father, all doubt of success.

Isaiab 63.

Christ's
comfort-
able am-
bassage.
John 20.

God himself also, after many threats used by the Prophet *Jeremiah* against the people of *Israel* for their sins, in the end, lest they should despair, changes his style, assuring them of many graces and favours, if they would return to him; telling the house of *Israel* that he had loved her from the beginning, and had sought to draw her to him by threats, to the end that he might have mercy upon her: and that now he intended to build her up again, to adorn her with joy and exultation, to gather her children from all corners of the earth, to refresh them with the waters and river of life. And all this, says he, *Quia factus sum Israeli Pater*: because I am become now a Father to *Israel*. And in the same place to wicked *Ephraim*, the head city of the rebellious kingdom of *Samaria*, that was to receive mercy, he says: *Ephraim* is become my honourable son, my delicate and dearly beloved child: therefore my bowels are moved with compassion upon him, and in abundance of mercy will I take pity of him. So much God attributed to this respect of

How
greatly the
respect of
a father
moves God
Jer. 31.

being a Father to *Israel* and *Ephraim*, and of their being his children, that for this cause only, notwithstanding their infinite and enormous sins, his bowels of endless mercy were moved with love and compassion towards them.

And these are the tender bowels of mercy, which
Luke 1. holy *Zachary*, father to *St. John Baptist*, protests to be in almighty God towards mankind that had offended him. These are those entrails of true and tender commiseration, which were in that good old father mention'd in the Gospel, who being not only offended, but also abandon'd by his younger son, yet after he saw him return home again, notwithstanding he had wasted all his goods and substance, and wearied out his body with his wicked life: he was so far from disdaining to receive him, that he came forth to meet him, fell upon his neck, and kiss'd him for joy, adorn'd him with new apparel and rich jewels, provided a solemn banquet for him, invited his friends to be merry with him, and shew'd more joy for his return, than if he had never departed from him.

Luke 16.
 The father's liberal heart to the prodigal son.

By which parable, our Saviour *JESUS* endeavour'd to set forth unto us, the incomprehensible mercy of his heavenly Father towards sinners: in which respect
2 Cor. 1. he is truly call'd by his Apostle *Pater misericordiarum*, the Father of mercies. Because as *St. Bernard* well notes,
Bern. ser. 1. de Nata. Psalm 35. this sea and ocean of mercies flows peculiarly from the heart of a father, which cannot be said so properly of the gulf and depth of his judgments. For which cause he is call'd in Scripture, *the God of justice and revenge*, and not the Father. And finally, this blessed name of Father does import to us by God's own testimony, all sweetness, all love, all friendship, all comfort, all fatherly providence, care, and protection, all certainty of favour, all assurance of grace, all security of mercy, pardon and remission of our sins, whensoever unfeignedly we turn unto him. And in this point his divine majesty is so forward and vehement in giving

What the name of Father does import.

us assurance, that not being content to set forth his love for us, by the love of a Father's heart; he goes further and protests to us, that his heart is more tender towards us in this behalf, than the heart of any mother can be to the only child and infant of her own womb. For thus he says to *Sion*, when for her sins she began to doubt lest he had forsaken her: *Can a woman forget her infant? that she will not have pity of the son of her womb? and if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee: behold, I have written thee in my hands,* And thus much for God's being call'd our Father.

Isaiah 43.

There remains yet a third consideration, which sets forth God's inestimable love, more than any of the other foregoing demonstrations. And it is, that he gave the life and blood of his only begotten, and eternal Son for the purchasing and redeeming us when we were lost. A price so infinite and inexplicable, that without doubt, his divine wisdom would never have given it, but for a thing which he had loved above all measure. Which our Saviour himself, that was to make the payment, does plainly signify; and therefore also seems, as it were, to wonder at such a bargain, when he says in the Gospel: *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* In which words, he ascribes this most wonderful dealing of his Father, to the vehemency and exceeding abundance of love; as does also his dearest Disciple and Apostle St. *John*, saying: in this appears the great love and charity of God towards us, that he has sent his only begotten Son into the world to purchase life for us. In this, I say, is made evident his exceeding charity; that we not loving him, he loved us first; and gave his own Son to be a ransom for our sins. Whereunto also the holy Apostle St. *Paul* agrees, admiring in like manner the excessive love of God in these words: God does marvelously commend and set forth his great love unto us, in that we being yet sinners, he gave his Son to death for our redemption. And in another place framing, as it were,

The third argument of God's love. The giving his Son for us.

John 3.

1 John 4.

Christ was given for love. *Rom. 5.*

Ephes. 2. a measure of God's mercy by this abundance of his love, he says thus: God, who is rich in mercy, through the exceeding love which he bore unto us, we being dead in sin, revived us in Christ, and raised us up even unto heaven, making us to sit down there with him, to the end he might declare to all ages and worlds ensuing, the most abundant riches of his grace and goodness towards us.

The conclusion of this point made by St. Paul. *Rom. 8.*

This was the opinion of that noble Apostle St. *Paul*, and of all his co-equals, Apostles, Evangelists, Disciples, and Saints, That this work of our redemption proceeded only from the inflamed furnace of God's immeasurable love. And therefore to make no other conclusion from hence, than that which St. *Paul* himself does make: if God has not spared his own only begotten Son, but has given him up to death, for gaining us unto him; how can it be, that with him he has not given unto us all other things? if when we were his enemies and thought not of him, he sent to seek us so diligently, by such a messenger whom he loved so dearly, allowing him to lay down a price for us which he so infinitely esteem'd; what shall we think that he will do to us now, we being made his own by redemption, if we return willingly to him, when receiving us will cost him nothing else but only a merciful look upon us, which is not so much from the infinite bowels of his bottomless mercy, as is one drop of water from the vast gulf of the main ocean. And this shall suffice for this first point of God's love, declared to us by the three most sweet and comfortable names, of Creator, Father, and Redeemer.

S E C T. II.

How God expresses his love towards sinners.

NEXT to this, we are to consider in what manner God is accusom'd to express and declare this love of his, in his dealings and proceedings with sinners, for

for their conversion and salvation. And first of all, the wise man, having had long experience of this matter, begins to describe and set it forth in this sort, saying to God himself: *Thou dissemblest the sins of men for repentance.* And then when they will not make profit of this his forbearance, but will needs force him to punish and correct them, he says, *Those that err, by parts thou dost chastise: and dost admonish and speak to them, concerning the things wherein they sin: that leaving naughtiness they may believe in thee O Lord.* These two points then of exceeding clemency, by the testimony of the wise man, are found in almighty God. First to wink at the wicked life of men, and to expect their conversion, with unspeakable patience and longanimity, according as the Prophet *Isaiab* bears witness, adjoining the cause thereof in these words: *Therefore our Lord expects that he may have mercy on you, and therefore shall he be exalted, sparing you.* And secondly, for the same reason, when he is forced by his justice, to chastise them, yet he does it with such moderation and mildness, that he always reserves place of pardon in this life.

Sap. 11.

Sap. 12.
Two rare
points of
clemency
in God.

Isaiab 30.

And to these two we may adjoin a third property of his mercy, more admirable perhaps, than the former; which is, as *Tertullian* excellently notes, that he being the party offended, yet first, and principally desires reconciliation, he having received the wrong and injury yet does most earnestly entreat for amity and atonement. And whereas in all right and equity he might deny us pardon, and in his power take revenge of us at his pleasure; yet he does not only offer us peace of his own accord, but also urges us by all means possible to accept of it, humbling, in a certain manner his divine majesty and greatness, to our baseness and vileness, as tho' he had need of us; and behaving himself in this respect as a prince enamoured with his bond-slave and abject servant.

Tertul.
in Apol. c.
2.

God that
is offended,
seeks, a-
tonement
with us.

This

This might be declared by many of his own speeches and doings in holy Scripture ; but one place out of the *Isaiab* 27. Prophet *Isaiab* shall serve for all, where almighty God shews such an earnest desire, of the conversion of *Jerusalem*, that no lover in the world could utter more signs and testimonies of a heart inflamed and set on fire with tender affection, than he does towards that city which so often and grievously had offended him. For first, after many threats pour'd out against her, if she did not return, lest she might perhaps fall into despair, he makes this protestation in the beginning of his speech : Angry I am not, but whatsoever I have spoken, I have spoken out of good-will and love. Secondly, he enters into this dispute and doubt with himself about punishing her sins : What shall I do? shall I tread her under my feet, and put her to the fire? or else will she stay my puissant hand and make peace with me? will she, I say, make atonement with me? after which doubt and hesitation, he resolves with himself to change the manner of his style, and to fall a little to chide with her, and then says, Hearken, O ye deaf inhabitants of *Jerusalem*; look about you, ye blind folks that will not see: who is blind and deaf but my servant, that will not regard or listen to the messengers which I send? O thou who hast open ears, wilt thou not hear? And then a little after, he begins to smooth and speak fair again, saying, Ever since thou hast been gracious and glorious in my eyes, I have loved thee; and for thy soul will I give whole nations. Fear not, for I am with thee. Wherewith she being little or nothing moved, he turns to a sweet manner of complaint, saying, Thou hast enthrall'd me by thy sins, and with thy iniquities thou hast greatly afflicted me. Which being said, and she somewhat won thereby to love him, as it seems, he turns to her with this most comfortable and kind speech: I am he who cancels thy iniquities for my own sake, and will never think any more upon thy sins.

God's
wooing of
Jerusalem
His protestation.
His hesitation.

His
chiding.
Isaiab 42.

His fair
speech.
Isaiab 43.

His kind
speech.

His kind
speech.

All which being done, and God and she now reconciled, and made friends: his divine majesty begins a very loving conference, as it were, and sweet expostulation with her, saying in these words: Call thou to memory the things that are past, and let us judge our selves here together. Tell me if thou hast any thing whereby thou mayst be justified. Thy first parent was a sinner, &c. Whereat she being ashamed, and having nothing in the world to answer for her self, almighty God comforts her, and makes up the whole matter in this most kind and amiable sort. Fear not, for I will pour out my spirit upon thee, and upon thy seed, and my benediction shall be upon thy off-spring; thy children shall bud up and flourish like willows planted by the water side. Thus says the Lord and King of *Israel*, the Lord of Hosts, that is thy Redeemer; I am the first, and the last, and besides me there is no other God. Be mindful of this, thou house of *Jacob*, I have dissolved and dissipated thy sin, as a cloud is dissolved in the air; be mindful of this, and have an assured confidence. Thus far continues the treaty between God and his city of *Jerusalem*.

His conference.

His sweet conclusion.

And now tell me, dear Christian, whether it be possible for any heart or tongue in this world, to conceive or express more ways or significations of a most vehement good-will and burning affection, than has been declared by God in this treaty. What lover or enamour'd person upon earth, what passionate heart could seek more earnestly, sue more diligently, sollicit more artificially, complain more tenderly, expostulate more amiably, remit offences more readily, offer benefits more abundantly, conclude more sweetly, and give more pregnant testimonies of unfeign'd love, or more assured certainty of eternal league and amity, than almighty God does to this nation, which had so grievously offended him? who will not confess now with the Prophet *David*: *That our Lord is sweet to all, and his commiserations are over all his works.*

A consideration upon the former treaty of God with *Jerusalem*

Psal. 144.

Who

Psalm 88. Who will wonder, if the same Prophet resolves, that his everlasting song should be of the mercies of this his Lord and Maker?

God's tender love to *Jerusalem* when he was to destroy it.

But yet this thing is made much more apparent, by that which his divine majesty did afterwards to the same people in the days of *Jeremiah* the Prophet, above a hundred years after this treaty we spoke of in the time of *Isaiah*. For when God was resolved to destroy them and their city, for their obduration in their sins; when the hour of execution drew near, his bowels of mercy were so touch'd with commiseration towards them, that he call'd to *Jeremiah*, and commanded him once again to go up to the temple-gate, where all the people pass'd in and out, and there with a loud voice to cry as follows: Hear ye the word of God. O all

Jer. 7.

you of *Judah* that do pass in and out by these gates; thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of *Israel*: yet do you amend your ways, and I will dwell in this place with you, &c. And when this exhortation, and endeavour of almighty God could not prevail with them: then his unspeakable goodness began with sharp threats in this manner: My fury and indignation is gather'd together upon this city; and upon the inhabitants, and upon the very beasts and cattle thereof; as also upon the fruit and trees of this region. The carcases of this people shall be food to the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the field; their enemies shall come and cast forth of their sepulchres, the bones of the kings and princes of *Judah*; the bones of their priests,

Ibid.

Jer. 8.

prophets and inhabitants, and shall dry them in the Sun, and cast them out upon the dunghil. After all which long and dreadful commination, he alters his speech presently again, and says in a lamentable voice. And will not he that is fallen, notwithstanding all this, rise up again? will not he that is departed from me, return to me again? O why does my people run from me so obstinately?

A pitiful complaint.

By which loving complaint, and infinite other means of mercy that God used with that people, when no amendment at all could be procured: his divine majesty was forced to call *Nabuchodonosor* king of *Babylon* before the walls of *Jerusalem*, to destroy it. But even then also consider the bowels of his unspeakable mercy. For hoping that by this terror they might perchance be stirred up to a conversion; he sent *Jeremiah* the Prophet to them again, with this embassy: Tell the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, will ye not receive discipline, and obey my words? whereat that graceless people was so little moved, that they took *Jeremiah* and cast him into prison for his message, and thereby exasperated most grievously God's further indignation against them. Notwithstanding all which, his incomprehensible clemency would not thus abandon them; but commanded holy *Jeremiah* to write out all his threats and promises in a book together, and send them to them from the prison, where he lay, by his servant *Baruch*, to be read in their hearing; which was done. Whereupon *Joachim* the king commanded *Baruch* to be brought into his presence, and there to read the book by the fire-side, as the Scripture notes. And when he had heard but three or four pages thereof, he cut them out with a penknife, and threw the whole book into the fire, and so consumed it. At which obstinate and impious dealing, altho' almighty God was extremely offended; yet he commanded this same book to be written again, in much more ample manner than before, thereby, if possible, to have stirr'd up, and gain'd that people to him. But when this by no means could be brought to pass; then his divine majesty permitted the whole to be destroy'd according to his former threat, and that rebellious people to be led away captive to *Babylon*. In which place and misery, notwithstanding their demerits, his infinite mercy could not forsake them, but sent his Prophet *Ezekiel*, as also *Baruch* to them with grievous complaints of their obduration; yet

The wonderful proceedings of God with *Jerusalem*

Jere. 35.

Jere. 36.

The obstinacy of the *Jewish* nation.

yet offering them mercy and pardon, even then, if they would repent.

An epithet given by God to the people of *Israel*.

Ezekiel 2.

A wonderful point.

And what more wonderful clemency than this, can possibly be imagin'd, dear Christian? can any one now in reason ever enter into doubt, or despair of God's mercy, how great and grievous soever the burden of his sins is, when he considers this proceeding of his eternal majesty with the people of *Israel*, for so many years and ages together; whom himself calls notwithstanding, an apostatising nation, of a shameless countenance and incorrigible disposition? can God devise any more effectual and forcible means, to erect and animate a sinner to return confidently unto him, than these are? and yet for our further comfort and encouragement in this behalf; I will add one thing more, which exceeds all reason and reach of human imagination: which is, that God promises a sinner that faithfully returns to him, not only to forget and utterly extinguish all memory of his former iniquities; but also to rejoice and triumph more at his conversion, and to love and cherish him more tenderly at his return, than if he had never fallen or departed from his service.

Isaiab 40. What joy there is made at a sinner's conversion.

Isaiab 30.

This God himself signifies by the Prophet *Isaiab*, when he says: Call unto *Jerusalem*, speak unto her heart, that is, comfortably, because her iniquity is forgiven; she has received double at God's hands for all her sins committed. And more plainly in another

Luke 15.

place by the same Prophet: *The light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days in the day, when our Lord shall bind up the wound of his people and shall heal the stroke of their wound.* And to this purpose are those most wonderful parables of our Saviour in the Gospel, as for example, the extraordinary joy and feasting, the careful woman had made, when she had found her groat that was lost, and the good shepherd, when he brought back the sheep that went astray; and the merciful father, when he received his son home, that

that before had abandon'd him. And it is to this purpose that in the Prophet *David*, God glories, especially *Psalms 57.* in the service of those people that before had not known him. And this shall suffice for this second point, to shew, what wonderful means almighty God does use, in setting forth his mercy to allure sinners to repentance.

S E C T. III.

What assurance of pardon God gives to them that repent, and return to him.

HAVING declared what exceeding great love and mercy God bears towards man, and how effectually he expresses the same by his inviting sinners to their conversion: it follows that we should in this third place examine somewhat more in particular, what certain assurance his divine majesty gives of undoubted pardon and full remission of their sins, to all such as unfeignedly resolve to make their recourse to him. Which altho' every man by what we have said before, may sufficiently conceive, yet because of the importance of the matter, it will not be amiss in this place also to add a word or two, for a more plain and evident demonstration thereof. And this I will do by shewing, what God almighty has said and done, promised and perform'd, as to this point, in regard to such as have offended him.

And as to the first, which are his promises: it is most apparent, as well by the things which before have been discuss'd, as also by the whole course, body, and drift of holy Scripture; that the promises of mercy and pardon which his divine majesty has made to sinners, whereunto by his sacred word he has, in a certain manner, obliged himself; are both manifold, vehement, absolute, and universal: Whosoever shall depart from his wicked ways, and turn unto me, says almighty God, I will receive him. Behold the univer-

The promises of God to sinners that repent.

Ezek. 18,

ality

sality of all people and persons, without excluding any. And again : At what day soever an impious man shall return to me from his impiety, his wickedness shall not hurt him, says the same Lord God of Hosts : see the universality of all times and seasons, without exception. But yet hearken what God still adds : *Leave off to do perversely*, says he to the Jews, &c. *And come and accuse me says our Lord. If your sins shall be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow*, &c. Consider how universally he speaks of all kind of sins ; be they never so grievous, so horrible, or heinous. And finally, God talking to a soul that has oftentimes fallen, and most infinitely offended him, he says thus : *It is commonly said, if a man put away his wife, and she departing from him, marry another man, will he return to her any more ? shall not the woman be polluted and contaminated ? But thou hast committed fornication with many other lovers ; nevertheless return unto me, says our Lord, and I will receive thee.*

Isaiah 1.

Jere. 3.

The promise of pardon extends to all repenting sinners.

Which words contain all states, qualities, and conditions of men, how many ways, or how contemptuously soever they have sinned against his divine majesty. And what can be added to this ? was there ever prince that made so large an offer to his subjects ? or was there ever father that gave so ample, and universal promise of pardon to his children ? Who can mistrust himself to be excluded from this assurance of mercy, wherein all sorts of people, all kind of sins, and times and seasons, all states and qualities of sinners are comprehended ? O most miserable and unfortunate man who excludes himself, whom God does not exclude. What is there in this general and universal promise, wherein any man in the world can pretend to make the least doubt or question ? he cannot doubt of the meaning, and intention of him that promises, his intention is only love and charity, and consequently he cannot deceive us. He cannot doubt of the truth and surety of his promises, it is infallible, and more certain

Three points of great comfort.

certain than heaven and earth put together. He cannot doubt of the power that he has to perform his promise; it is infinite, and not restrain'd by any bounds or limitation. Of what then can we doubt? or in which of these three points ought we not to find a most singular comfort? Hear the comfortable meditation that blessed St. *Bernard* made upon these three particulars which we have now mention'd: "Consider three things, says this holy man, wherein all my hope consists, and whereby it is made invincible. First, the exceeding love and charity of him that calls me to him by repentance: secondly, the infallible truth and certainty of the promise he makes to me of pardon and mercy: thirdly, the endless power and ability he has to perform whatsoever he promises. This is that triple or threefold cord and chain which holy Scripture says is hardly broken: for that by this cord, let down unto us from heaven which is our country, into this world which is our prison; we may ascend and mount up, if we will, even unto the sight and possession of God's eternal kingdom and heavenly glory." Thus far that blessed father.

Bern. Sermon in verta Psal. Misericordias domini in ætern. Cantab.

Eccles. 4.

But now as to the second point: if we consider how faithfully almighty God has put in execution those promises of his from time to time, and how no one upon earth, tho' the world has continued so many ages, was ever yet frustrated of his hope, when he return'd to his divine majesty, if he return'd from his heart; we shall find still greater reason of comfort. Because it is not probable, or to be imagin'd, that he who never failed in times past, will break his promise for the time to come; especially seeing that now, as Christians, we have this advantage above former times, as St. *John* also notes, that he, who was and is our judge, is become also our patron and advocate to plead our cause.

How God has perform'd his promises to sinners that have repented.

John 2.

Let us cast back our eyes then, and take a view of all ages, times, and seasons past and gone. Let us

E e

begin

Never sinner repented that was not pardoned.

Gen. 3.
Adam and
Eve.

The rejection of
Cain, Esau, and
Judas.
Heb. 12.

Chrysof.
Hom. 80.
de penit.
ad pop.
Anti.

begin from the first creation of the world; and come downwards even unto this day? and examine indifferently, whether in all this wide compass of times, persons, places, and most grievous offences committed against his divine majesty, there was ever yet any one sinner upon earth, that truly return'd, and was not received. The sin of our first parents was presently forgiven them, upon their first signification of their grief and sorrow for the same. And moreover our Saviour *JESUS CHRIST* was promised as a Messias to restore them and their posterity to the glory and felicity which by their fall they had lost. After this, to the time of *Abraham*, and of the people of *Israel*, as some works of God's justice that were exercised upon irrepentant offenders, are recorded in holy Writ; so there are many more, celebrated of his mercy: and only two or three persons in particular are mention'd, who, notwithstanding some sorrow which they seem'd to have of their offences, were rejected. The first was the murderer *Cain*, who at the beginning denied his wickedness to God, and then being convicted, despair'd of pardon. The second was *Esau*, whom *St. Paul* calls a prophane fornicator, who found no place of repentance, tho' with tears he sought the same. Whereof *St. Chrysofom* gives the reason in these words: "*Esau* obtain'd not pardon, because he did not repent as he should have done, his tears proceeding rather out of anger and temptation, than out of true sorrow;" the third was *Judas*, in the New Testament; who made shew of sorrow and some repentance, but it was not true, as proceeding from despair. Wherefore let us look upon them that repented truly indeed.

When the people of *Israel* came to be a distinct nation, and govern'd by God's appointment, how grievously did they offend his divine majesty daily, and almost hourly? and how graciously did he remit and pardon their manifold innumerable sins and trespasses done against him? the whole Scripture seems

seems to be nothing else but a perpetual narration of God's incredible patience and infinite mercies towards them. And if I would speak of particular persons among them, whom he received to his favour after great and manifold offences committed; there would be no end. Let *Manasses* that most impious and wicked king be an example for all, with whose enormous life and most detestable acts, whole pages are fill'd, both in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, and yet afterwards, the same man falling into misery and calamity among the *Babylonians*, (a fortunate school oftentimes for princes, who in their prosperity condemn all admonishments) he began to be sorrowful for his former life and actions, and to do great penance, as the Scripture says, in the sight of God for the same. Whereat his divine and incomprehensible mercy was so much moved, that he received him to favour, and brought him back from his prison and fetters, to his kingdom and imperial throne of majesty again.

The infinite sins of the Jewish people, and how often pardon'd by God. The example of *Manasses*.
4 Reg. 21.
2 Par. 33.
Jere. 15.

The example also of the *Ninivites* is very notable and singular in this behalf: against whom almighty God having decreed a sentence of death to be executed within a certain time; he commanded *Jonas* the Prophet to go and denounce that sentence to them. But *Jonas* well knowing the nature and disposition of God towards mercy, foresaw, as afterwards he signifies, that if he should go upon that ambassy to them, and they thereupon make change of their lives; God would presently pardon them, and so he should be taken for a false, and lying Prophet. He therefore chose rather to fly away by sea, to the city of *Tharshis*, and there to hide himself. But almighty God raised a tempest in that journey, and disposed things so, that *Jonas* was cast into the sea, there received and devoured by a whale, from whose belly he was commanded afterwards to repair to *Ninive*, and to do his former message, which he perform'd. The tenor of which was, that

The example of the *Ninivites*.
Jonas 1, 2, 3, 4.

within forty days that great city of *Ninive* should be destroy'd. Which he having denounced to them, the sequel fell out, as *Jonas* before had suspected. For the *Ninivites* believing the message, and betaking themselves to repentance, God forgave them presently; whereat *Jonas* was exceedingly griev'd and offended, and complain'd sweetly to God of his strange dealing herein, demanding why he had forced him to come and preach destruction to them, knowing before-hand, that he would pardon them. But God answer'd him fully to this point, in a manner that *Jonas* was not able to reply one word.

Consider
this speech
of al-
mighty
God.

Jonas 4.

For *Jonas* sitting without the walls of *Ninive*, under an ivy bush, that in one night by God's appointment was sprung up to cover him from the Sun: the same ivy by God's order perish'd upon the sudden, and was consum'd by a worm, leaving the Prophet destitute of the comfort he received by that shade. Where-with he being not a little disquieted and afflicted; God said unto him: Thou, *Jonas*, art sorrowful and much griev'd for the loss of the ivy-tree, which notwithstanding thou didst not plant nor make to grow, nor took'st any labour at all about it, but the same grew up in one night, and in one night, it perish'd again. Shall not I then be careful to pardon my great city of *Ninive*, wherein there are above a hundred and twenty thousand innocent people, who cannot distinguish between the right hand and left? this was the answer from almighty God to *Jonas*, shewing his singular inclination to mercy, because that the *Ninivites* were his own workmanship, and labour of his own hands, as other people also are. Of which reason for his so mercifully dealing with us, we have spoke before, in the first part of this chapter, and in confirmation of what was there said, alleged these examples out of the Old Testament.

But if we look into the time of grace, when God incarnate came himself in person, to shew the riches of his
endless

endless mercy unto mortal men upon earth: we shall see more examples without comparison, of this exceeding clemency. For then our Creator and Shepherd, overcome, as it were, with extream compassion, came down into this vale of misery, with resolution not only to offer pardon and forgiveness to all his sheep that were astray, and would return: but also to follow and seek them out; and being found, to lay them on his own shoulders, and so to carry them back unto the fold again, and there to give his life and blood for their defence against the wolf. O sweet Lord! what greater love can be imagined than this? what more pregnant signification of inflamed charity can man's heart conceive or apprehend? can it seem strange now if he who descended unto us with this heart, and with these bowels of burning affection, did set open the gates of all his treasures, favours and graces unto us? can we wonder if the holy Apostle *St. Paul* says of this time: that grace did over abound. And in another place, that the grace of our Saviour has appear'd to all men.

Examples
of mercy
in the New
Testament

Luke 15.

*Rom. 5.
Titus 2.*

Hence it proceeds that his delight and pleasure upon Earth, was to converse with sinners, and to give them comfort, courage and confidence in him. Which he did so manifestly in the sight of all the world, that he thereby offended the Scribes and Pharisees, and other principal rulers among the *Jewish* nation. Hence also proceeds his so movingly inviting wicked men to have access to him. As for example, when he cried out in publick: *Come to me all that labour and are burden'd, and I will refresh you.* And at another time, going into the temple of *Jerusalem* upon a high festival day, when all the people were gather'd together: he stood up in the midst of them all, and broke forth into this vehement invitation, with a loud voice, as *St. John* Evangelist records: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* Hence it came to pass, that his divine

The won-
derful cle-
mency of
Jesus our
Saviour.
*Mat. 9. 11.
Mark 2.
Luke 5.*

Mat. 11.

John 7.

majesty was call'd, a friend of Publicans and sinners. And hence it proceeded, that he received all, embraced all, and forgave all that repair'd to him, were they Scribes, Pharisees, Soldiers, Publicans, Usurers, Harlots, Thieves, Persecutors, or whatsoever most grievous offenders (whereof particular examples in each kind might be alleged;) assuring us also, that after his Resurrection, and blessed Ascension to the right hand of his Father, he would be more bountiful, yet in this manner of proceeding, *and draw all unto himself*, he being both our Judge and Advocate; our King and Mediator, our God and Redeemer, our Father and Brother, our Priest and Sacrifice; and he who both pleads; and determines our cause at the same time.

John 12.

Great
and many
causes of
hope.

What then may we not hope at the hand of this our Lord and Master, who has left such words, such deeds, such evidences of his infallible love and abundant mercies towards us! why should not his dealings with other men before us, give us heart and courage to confide in him, for the time present and to come? why should not his former infinite sweet mercies be as so many odoriferous, and fragrant favours and ointments, to make us, as they did the spouse in the *Canticles*, follow and run after him? hear what devout St. Bernard meditates upon this passage of Christ's fragrant ointments. "O sweet JESUS, says he, the
" fresh and odoriferous smell of your wonderful cle-
" mency, allures us to run after you, when we hear
" you say, you despise not beggars, nor abhor sinners.
" We know right well, O Lord, that you rejected
" not the thief that confessed you; nor the sinful wo-
" man that wept upon you; nor the *Cananean* that
" humbled herself before you; nor the wicked adul-
" tress brought to you: nor the tribute-gatherer that
" follow'd you; nor the Publican that repair'd to you;
" nor the Disciple that denied you; nor *Saul* that did
" persecute you, nor the tormentors that nail'd your
" sacred

Cant. 1.
Bern.
Serm. 22.
in Cant.

“ sacred body to the Cross. O Lord, all these are
 “ fragrant smells and favours of your most sweet
 “ mercy ; and at the sent of these your ointments, we
 “ do follow and run after you ? ” Thus far *St. Bernard.*

S E C T. IV.

*Containing the application of all that has
 been said.*

TO come then to the fourth and last part of
 this chapter, and to apply all that has been said
 of God's mercy, to our present purpose, what man is
 there who reading and believing these things, can
 doubt or mistrust of pardon for his sins ? *If God be for* *Rom. 8.*
us, who is against us ? ----- God that justifies, who is he
that shall condemn us ? says the holy Apostle *St. Paul.*
 If God has a mind to deliver us, who can take us out
 of his hands ? if God protests that he will pardon us,
 why should we doubt or question it ? Why should not
 we join rather with that confident and faithful ser-
 vant of his, *St. Paul,* who says to us, and all other
 sinners, in his master's name : Let us repair unto him *Heb. 20.*
 with a true heart, in fulness of faith, having purged
 our hearts from an evil conscience : let us hold fast
 an immoveable confession of our hope, seeing he is
 faithful who has given us his promise, and let us con-
 sider how one of us may provoke another to charity
 and good works. By which words the holy Apostle
 signifies, that what sinner soever will resolve with him-
 self to purge his conscience from wickedness for the
 time to come, and to employ the rest of his life in
 charity and good works ; he may confidently and bold-
 ly repair to God, with most certain assurance of re-
 ceiving pardon and remission. And alas, why then
 should any man despair ? wherefore should any one
 cast away his own soul, that God so much desires to
 save ? what a lamentable case is it, to behold so many

Christians languishing in their sins, and giving themselves over to all kind of careless, and dissolute sensuality, upon this sad imagination, that now they are gone so far, and so deeply rooted and habituated in this kind of life; that either it is impossible, or in vain for them to think of change or amendment? O let these men hearken to this excellent discourse of holy *Cbrysoström* who speaks thus.

An excellent discourse and exhortation of St. *Cbrysoström*.
Hom. 2.
in Psal. 50.

“ If you are a wicked man, says he, think of the publican: if unclean of life, consider the harlot: if a murderer remember the thief: if a swearer, call to mind the blasphemer. Cast your eyes upon *Saul* or *Paul*, first a persecutor, and then a preacher; first a violent robber, afterwards a good steward and dispenser; first chaff, afterwards good corn; first a wolf, afterwards a shepherd; first lead, after gold; first a disperser, afterwards a gatherer; first a breaker down of God’s vineyard, afterwards a planter; first a destroyer, afterwards a builder. Thou hast seen many wickednesses, but behold unspeakable mercy. Thou hast heard the pride of the servant; consider now the love and clemency of the Master. I will not have you tell me, I am a blasphemer, I have been a persecutor, I have led an unclean and abominable life, and therefore I doubt, I shall not have pardon: say not so to me, for here thou hast examples to the contrary, in every one of these and many other sins. Thou mayst safely fly to what refuge thou wilt, and that either in the Old or New Testament. For in the Old thou hast *David*; in the New thou hast *Paul*. I will not have thee therefore allege excuses to cover thy own cowardise. Hast thou sinned? do penance. Hast thou sinned a thousand times? repent sincerely a thousand times. This is the only ointment that may be poured into a wounded conscience, the torment whereof I well know. For the devil stands by, sharpening the sword of despair and saying: thou hast lived wickedly

“ all

“ all thy youth, and in all thy former years thou hast
 “ haunted plays and spectacles with thy companions,
 “ and hast follow'd loose and lascivious women : thou
 “ hast taken other mens goods from them wrong-
 “ fully : thou hast been covetuous, dissolute, and effe-
 “ minate : thou hast forsworn thy self : thou hast
 “ blasphem'd, and committed many other hainous and
 “ enormous crimes ; and therefore what hope canst
 “ thou have of salvation ? truly none at all. Thou art
 “ a meer cast-away, and canst not now go back ; and
 “ therefore my counsel is, that now thou use the
 “ pleasures and commodities of this world, and pass
 “ over thy time in mirth of heart, without any
 “ thought of other affairs for the present, &c.”

The speech
 of the
 devil to a
 soul loaden
 with sin.

Hitherto are *St. Chrysostom's* words, uttering the despair of sinners, and the devil's counsel unto them. But let us hear his answer, which thus immediately follows in the same homily.

These are the words of the devil, says he. “ These
 “ are the counsels and persuasions of our enemy. But
 “ mine are quite contrary. If thou hast fallen, thou
 “ mayst rise again : if thou hast been a lost companion,
 “ yet thou mayst be saved : if thou hast committed
 “ fornication, and adultery in time past ; thou mayst be
 “ continent for the time to come : if thou hast haunted
 “ plays and games ; thou mayst draw back thy foot
 “ from henceforth : if thou hast delighted in lewd and
 “ evil company ; thou mayst hereafter acquaint thy self
 “ with good. Thou hast free-will to chuse either part.
 “ This only is necessary to begin thy conversion out
 “ of hand, and repent and take in hand to reform thy
 “ self, tho' it be at the first but a little. Let thy eyes
 “ begin but to shed one tear, enter into thy conscience,
 “ consider thy self but indifferently : examin thy
 “ actions and what they deserve, lay before thy face
 “ the day of judgment, with the torments of hell on
 “ the one side, and the joys of heaven on the other :
 “ repent, confess, amend thy life, seek a medicine for
 “ thy

St. Chry-
stom's
 counsel
 against the
 devil's
 tempta-
 tions.

No time
 too late to
 repent.

“ thy wound out of hand, whilst thou art in this life,
 “ in what state or condition soever thou art: yea if
 “ upon thy death bed, ready to breathe out thy soul
 “ and spirit; fear not to repent: for God’s mercy is
 “ not restrain’d by the shortness of time. Which I
 “ say to you, my dear brethren, not to make you
 “ thereby the more negligent, but only to stir you up
 “ to confidence in God’s mercy, and thereby to avoid
 “ the most dangerous gulf of despair.” Hitherto this
 holy and learned father.

In which long discourse of his, we are to note, that
 (together with the excellent encouragement which he
 gives to all sinners of what state and condition soever they
 are, in all times and seasons, to confide in God’s mercy,
 and never to despair:) he also gives a wholsom ad-
 monition, that we should not by this confidence become
 more negligent in reforming our lives, but rather do it
 out of hand, without delay or procrastination. Where-
 unto, in like manner the holy father St. *Augustine* in
 a like exhortation against despair, endeavours most ve-
 hemently to stir us up in these words: “ Let no man,
 “ says he, after a hundred sins, nor after a thousand,
 “ despair of God’s mercy; but yet so let him not
 “ despair, as to seek presently without all stay, to re-
 “ concile himself to God by amendment of life; lest
 “ perhaps after that, by custom, he has got a habit of
 “ sin, he be not able to deliver himself from the snares
 “ of the devil, altho’ he would, &c.” So he.

And in the very same sermon, the same doctor dis-
 courses yet more at large upon the same matter, as
 follows: “ Not every man that has sinn’d, but he that
 “ perseveres in sin, is hateful and abominable in the
 “ sight of God. Because no man must diffide of God’s
 “ mercy towards him that will amend and leave his
 “ sins. For God himself as a most sweet comforter has
 “ said by his Prophet: *That the impiety of a wicked*
 “ *man shall not hurt him, in what day soever he shall*
 “ *turn from the same.* But yet this great mercy of
 “ our

An exhor-
 tation and
 admoni-
 tion of
 St. *Augu-*
stine.
Serm. 58.
de Temp.

Exek. 11.

“ our Lord, is then only profitable to us when we
 “ delay not our conversion, nor multiply sins upon
 “ sins. Which I will declare to you by the example of
 “ wounds and ruptures of our body, by which the in-
 “ firmities also of our mind and soul may be conceived.
 “ Thus then we see, if a man's foot, leg, or arm be
 “ broken, with how great pain the same is restored to
 “ its accusom'd strength again. But if any member of
 “ our body be broken twice, or three times, or oftener
 “ in one and the self same place: your charity can
 “ imagine, how hard a thing it would be for that part
 “ to recover perfect health again. So fares it, dear
 “ brethren, in the wounds and ruptures of our soul.
 “ If a man commits a sin once or twice, and 'un-
 “ feignedly, without dissimulation, has recourse to the
 “ medicine of penance, out of hand he obtains health
 “ again, and that sometimes without any fear or mark
 “ of the past disease. But if he begins to add sins
 “ upon sins, so that the wounds of his soul rather
 “ putrify within him, by covering and defending
 “ them, than heal by repentance and confession: it is
 “ to be fear'd, lest that heavy speech of the Apostle be
 “ fulfill'd in him, to whom he says: Dost thou not
 “ know, that the benignity of God is used to bring
 “ thee to repentance? but thou by thy obdurate and
 “ impenitent heart, dost heap to thy self wrath in the
 “ day of vengeance, of the revelation of God's judg-
 “ ment.” Thus far St. *Augustine*.

A simili-
tude of the
body to
express the
misery of
the soul,
by multi-
plying sin.

Rom. 2.

Godly
men's word
ought to
move us
greatly.
Eccles 12.

And now, dear Christian, what can be spoken more effectual, either to raise our hope and confidence in God's mercy, or to terrify us from presumption in delaying our amendment, than what has been utter'd here by these noble pillars, and fathers of Christ's Church, and most excellent instruments and temples of his holy spirit? The divine wisdom of almighty God in a certain place says: That the words of wise men ought to be spurs to us, and as it were nails driven into the depth of our hearts; meaning thereby, that we should

be

be stirr'd up and most vehemently moved, when we hear such wise men as the Holy Ghost there means, (which indeed are only they that have the knowledge and true fear of God) make such exhortations unto us, and give us such wholsom admonitions, as these godly fathers in this great affair have done. And how is it then, dear brother, that we are nothing stirr'd up thereby, nothing quickned, nothing awaked? I will conclude this whole chapter and treatise, with another exhortation and admonition of St. *Augustine*; for besides the grave authority of the man, which ought to move us much, I think nothing can be spoken more excellently, or more agreeing to our present purpose.

A notable
discourse
of St. *Augustine*
touching
our con-
version.
Serm. 181.
de Temp.
cap. 16.

Psaln 54.

“ Almighty God, says he, never despises the repen-
“ tance of any man, if it be offer'd him sincerely :
“ nay, he accepts the same most willingly, embraces
“ the penitent and endeavours to reduce him to his
“ former state wherein he was before he fell. And that
“ which is yet more, if a man be not able to fulfil the
“ whole order of his satisfaction; yet God does not
“ refuse the least penance that is, tho' it be done in
“ never so short a space. Neither does he suffer the
“ reward to perish of any little conversion. And this
“ the Prophet *Isaiab* seems to me to signify, when he
“ says in God's person to the people of *Israel* : *For a*
“ *moment, a little while have I forsaken thee. In a*
“ *moment of indignation have I hid my face a little*
“ *while from thee, and in mercy everlasting have I had*
“ *mercy on thee, said the Redeemer our Lord.* Having
“ these examples of penance, dear brethren, before
“ our eyes, let us not persevere in our wickedness, nor
“ despair of reconciliation; but rather let us say with
“ a confident heart, we will return home to our fa-
“ ther, and present our selves to our God. For truly, my
“ brethren, he will never turn away from the man,
“ that turns to him. He himself has said, that he is
“ a God that draws near unto us, were it not that
“ our sins make a separation between him and us.

“ Let

“ Let us then take away the separation and obstacle,
 “ and so nothing will hinder our conjunction with him,
 “ which he greatly desires. For to this end did he
 “ create us, that he might bestow upon us eternal bliss
 “ in his kingdom of heaven. He did not make us
 “ for hell, but he made his kingdom for us, and hell
 “ for the devil. So he says in the Gospel, *Come ye
 blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you
 from the beginning of the world :* and to the damn'd, *de-
 part from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is
 prepared for the devil and his angels.*

Hell not
made for
man.

Mat. 25.

“ If then hell fire was prepared for the devil, and
 “ the kingdom of heaven for man, from the beginning
 “ of the world ; it remains only, that we take care not
 “ to lose our inheritance by persisting in sin. As long
 “ as we are in this life, how many or great soever our
 “ sins may be, it is possible to wash them away by pe-
 “ nance ; but when we shall be once departed from
 “ this world, altho' then we repent, as no doubt but
 “ we shall from the bottom of our hearts, yet it will
 “ avail us nothing. And altho' our teeth do gnash,
 “ our mouth cry out, our eyes gush forth into tears,
 “ and our hearts lament with innumerable complaints
 “ and supplications : yet no man will hear us, no man
 “ assist us, nor so much as with the tip of his finger give
 “ us a drop of water to cool our tongue amidst our tor-
 “ ments ; but we shall receive that lamentable answer
 “ which the rich glutton received from the mouth of
 “ *Abraham* : there is between us and you a great di-
 “ stance, so that none may pass from us to you, nor
 “ from you to us.” Hitherto lasts *St. Augustine's* ex-
 hortation ; which being so full as it is, and directly
 to our purpose, against despair of God's mercies, and
 the other extream delay of our amendment, upon pre-
 sumption or negligence ; I shall not need to add any
 thing to it at all, but end this first chapter with it.

In this life
all penance
is avail-
able, but
not after.

C H A P. II.

The second hindrance of resolution, which are certain pretended difficulties of the hardness and asperity of a virtuous life : the fallacy whereof is discover'd, and the manifold helps, that make the same most easy, sweet, and pleasant, declared.

SECT. I. *That the way of virtue is not so hard as sinners generally apprehend.*

Two af-
faults of
our ghost-
ly enemy.

THE everlasting and irreconcilable enemy of our heavenly bliss and salvation, having received by the former reasons and considerations of God's infinite goodness, a very strong encounter and contradiction against his first and greatest assault of despair (himself also being forced to confess, tho' with endless grief and envy, that the mercy of almighty God is without measure towards man) he retires himself back many times from the pursuit of that point (in such especially as have yet some time to live in this world, and seem not to be near their last days) and undertakes, to persuade such sinners as he cannot bring to despair, at least to stand off, and keep themselves from all resolution to put in use and fulfil the precepts of a Christian life, because they are hard, unsavoury, painful, and troublesome; full of melancholy and sadness; void of comfort and recreation; opposite to all mirth, content, and joy; subject to continual affliction and vexation of mind; and finally, not supportable to such bodies, such minds, such education, such customs, such course of life, as theirs are.

This is an ordinary slight and stratagem of our adversary, which he makes so plausible, flattering our sensuality, that most men of the world receive this persuasion for sound counsel and perfect wisdom; esteeming
all

all those, either simple or sottish, or at least far inferior in judgment, and discretion to themselves, that embrace or persuade the contrary. By which means it comes to pass, that the fear of difficulties in a virtuous life, is a very great, strong, ordinary, and universal impediment, which hinders infinite souls from embracing the means of their salvation, consequently not to be passed over in this place, without a full examination and a perfect answer.

First then, altho' we should suppose that the way of virtue was so hard indeed, as the enemy would make it seem: yet I might well say with *St. John Chrysostom*, that seeing the reward is so great and infinite, as before we have declared, no labour should seem great for the gaining thereof. Again, I might say with holy *St. Augustine*, that seeing we daily take so great pains in this world to avoid lesser inconveniencies, as of sickness, imprisonment, loss of goods and life, and the like; what pains should we refuse for the avoiding the eternity of hell fire, the torment of which is insupportable? the first of these considerations *St. Paul* used, when he said, The sufferings of this life are not worthy of the glory which shall be revealed in the next. The second, *St. Peter* used, when he writ, That seeing the heavens must be dissolved and Christ come in judgment to restore to every man according to his works, what manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation? as if he would say, no labour, no pains, no penance, ought to seem hard or great to us, to avoid the terror of that dreadful day. *St. Augustine* demands this question, What we think the rich glutton in hell would do now to avoid his torments, if he were in this life again? would he take pains or no? would he bestir himself, rather than return into that place of calamity again? I think he would, and that after another manner from what he did when he was here. I might add to this the infinite pains that Christ took for us; the infinite benefits he has bestow'd upon

If a virtuous life were hard, yet worthy our labour. *Lib. de compunct. cord. Hom. 26. 59.*

Rom. 8.

upon us ; the infinite sins we have committed against him ; the infinite examples of Saints that have trod this path before us, tho' some of them perhaps were of a more delicate constitution of body than we are. In respect of all which points well consider'd, we ought not to boggle at a little pains and labour, tho' it were true that God's service were as troublesome as many do esteem it, and as the devil represents it to us.

But now in reality there is nothing of this, and this is but a subtle deceit of the enemy for our discouragement. The testimony of Christ himself is clear in

The way
of virtue is
not hard
indeed.

Mat. 12.

1 John 5.

The cause
of pre-
tended dif-
ficulties.

Rom. 7.

Ibid.

4 Reg. 5.

this point, saying, *Jugum meum suave est, & onus meum leve* : my yoke is sweet, and my burden light. And his dearly beloved Disciple St. John, says plainly, *Mandata ejus gravia non sunt* : his commandments are not grievous. What is the reason why so many men think there is such an insupportable difficulty in this affair ? surely one is, besides the fallacy of the devil, which is the chief, that men feel the disease of concupiscence in their bodies, but do not consider the strength of the medicine given us against the same : they cry out with St. Paul, that they find a law in their members, repugnant to the law of their mind : (which is the rebellion of concupiscence left in our flesh by original sin) but they confess not, or consider not with the same Apostle : That the grace of God by Jesus Christ, shall deliver them from the same. They remember not the comfortable saying of our Saviour to St. Paul, in the midst of his greatest temptations : *Sufficit tibi gratia mea*. My grace is sufficient to strengthen thee against them all. These men, I say, do as *Eliseus* Disciple did, who casting his eye, only upon the number of his enemies, that is, upon the huge army of the *Syrians* ready to assault him, thought himself lost and utterly unable to stand in their sight, till by the prayers of his master the holy Prophet, he was permitted by God to see the Angels that stood there present to fight on his side, and then he well perceived that his party was the stronger.

So

So it fares with weak and distrustful people, who feeling and considering only the miseries and infirmities of their own nature, account the battle painful, and the victory impossible; having not tasted indeed, nor ever, through their own fault and negligence, experienced the manifold helps of heavenly and spiritual succours, which almighty God never fails to send such as are content to undertake the conflict for his sake. St. Paul who had experienced that aid, having reckon'd up all the hardest encounters and impediments that could occur, says notwithstanding: *But in all these things we overcome, because of him that has loved us.* And then he makes that most wonderful protestation, whereof both heaven, earth, and hell may stand in admiration: that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor any other power, should be able to separate him from Christ, or to make him abandon his service; and all this upon the confidence of that spiritual aid from his Saviour, in virtue of which he affirms: That he could do all things without exception. The Prophet David also had experienced the force of this assistance, when he said: *I run the way of thy commandments, when thou didst dilate my heart.* This dilatation of heart was by spiritual consolation of internal attraction, whereby a man's heart, straiten'd by anguish and sorrow, is open'd and dilated, when God's holy grace is poured into it. So that he who without God's assistance is able to do nothing: with the aid thereof, is made able to conquer and overcome all difficulties.

The singular assistance of God for overcoming difficulties.

Rom. 8.

Phil. 4.

Psal. 118.

Psal. 118.

I would gladly ask those men who imagine the way of God's holy law to be so hard and full of difficulty; how that holy Prophet could say, *I have taken pleasure in the way of thy testimonies, as in all riches?* and in another place: *That the judgments of our Lord be true, justified in themselves, to be desired above gold and much precious stone; and more sweet than honey, or the boney-comb?* by which words he gives a virtuous life, not only due estimation of honour and value above

all treasures in the world : but also of pleasure, delight, and sweetness ; thereby to confound all those that abandon and forsake the same, upon idle, pretended, and feign'd difficulties. And if king *David* could say thus much in the Old Testament, and of the Old Law, which was infinitely more hard than is the New : with how much more reason may we speak it now in the time of grace, when not only the service of God in it self, is without all comparison more sweet and easy : but also the peculiar helps and assistances of almighty God, are much more effectual and abundant !

John 5.
Rom. 5.
Heb.

The end of
Christ's com-
ing to
make the
way easy.

To make this more evident, I would demand of thee, poor unfortunate Christian, that deceivest thy self with these appearances of imaginary difficulties, why Christ our Saviour came into this world ? why he took our flesh upon him ? why he labour'd and took so much pains among us ? why he shed his blood ? why he pray'd to his Father so often for us ? why he appointed the Sacraments as conduits, to communicate his most holy grace unto us ? why he sent the Holy Ghost into the world ? what signified Gospel or good tidings ? what means the words Grace and Mercy, brought with him ? what imports the comfortable name of *JESUS* ? is not all this to deliver us from sin ? from sin past, by his death ? from sin present and to come ; by the same death, and the assistance of his grace bestow'd on us more abundantly than before ? was not this one of the principal effects of Christ's coming, as the Prophet noted : That craggy paths should be made straight ? was not this the cause, why he endow'd his Church with the seven blessed gifts of the Holy Ghost, and with the infused virtues ; to make the yoke of his service, sweet, the exercise of a good life, easy, the walking in his commandments pleasant, so that men might now sing in tribulations, have confidence in perils, security in afflictions, and assurance of victory in all temptations ? is not this the beginning, middle, and end of the Gospel ?

Isaiab 40.

Gospel? were not these the promises of the Prophets, the tidings of the Evangelists, the preachings of the Apostles, the doctrine, belief, and practice of all Saints? and finally, is not this *Verbum abbreviatum*, the word of God abbreviated, or made short, wherein do consist all the riches, and treasures of our Christian profession? *Isaiah 10.*

But because this matter is of exceeding great weight, to the strengthening of Christians in their vocation, against the temptations of pusillanimity and dejection, which are very ordinary and dangerous to most men in the world; it will not be amiss, to treat and discuss the same more at large in this place, laying down the particular means and helps which every man has, or may have in this concern, if he want not will to use and apply the same to his assistance and advantage. And because the field is large, and the matters are many which appertain to this point: I have thought convenient for more plainness and perspicuity of the reader, to reduce the whole sum to two general heads and parts. The sum of this chapter, with the two general parts thereof.

In the first whereof, I will shew the manifold and sundry helps that almighty God does lend to man for the facilitating the way of his holy commandments: and in the second, I will lay down certain instructions, admonitions, and examples, how to make our advantage of the helps that are lent us.

S E C T. II.

Of the helps that are given to Christians to make a virtuous life easy.

IT would be a very hard and difficult matter for any one to take upon him to set forth all the particular ways and means whereby our most merciful Lord and Saviour does comfort, strengthen, and cherish the soul that resolves to live faithfully in his service. These are infinite secrets that do pass between them, infinite privy tokens and significations of love, that none else

The infinite helps and comforts of a soul resolved to serve God.

can exprefs or conceive: but as to thofe publick and ordinary ways, whereby it is evident in holy Writ, that almighty God is accuftom'd to work this effect of making his commandments fweet and eafy; I fhall here recount the chief and principal, for our common confolation and encouragement.

2 Cor. 12. First of all, we muft reckon in this number, the infufion of God's moft holy and precious grace into our minds and fouls, whereby they are beautified, and ftrengthen'd againft all difficulties and temptations, as St. Paul was againft the tribulations and temptations of the flefh. And this grace is of fuch efficacy and force in the foul where it once enters, that it alters the whole ftate thereof, making thofe things clear, which were obfcure before; thofe things pleafant, which were bitter before; thofe things eafy, which were difficult before. And for this caufe alfo it is faid in Scripture, that it makes a new fpirit, and a new heart, where it is beftow'd by almighty God; which his divine majefty fignifies by the Prophet Ezekiel in thefe words, when he treats of the graces that fhould be given at the coming of Chrift in flefh: *I will give them one heart, and I will give them a new fpirit in their bowels, that they may walk in my precepts, and keep my commandments and do them.* What can be fpoken more effectually of the power of God's holy grace, enabling us to the performance of good works?

The force of grace in refifting temptations.

In like manner concerning the force and efficacy of the fame grace to refift, mortify, and conquer the paffions of our flefh and fenfuality, which by their rebellion againft virtue, make the way of God's commandments unpleafant. St. Paul writes thus to the Romans: *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of fin might be destroyed, to the end that we may ferve fin no more.* In which words, by the old man, and the body of fin, St. Paul underftands our rebellious appetite and concupifcence which is fo crucified

Rom. 6.

cified and destroy'd by the most noble Sacrifice of Christ our Saviour; * that we may, by the grace purchased unto us in that holy Sacrifice, resist and conquer this appetite, and so keep our selves from the servitude of sin: that is, from any consent to mortal sin, if we will our selves. And this is that noble and entire victory which God promised so long ago to every Christian soul by the means of Christ, when he said, Be not afraid, for I am with thee: step not aside, for I thy God have strengthen'd thee, and have assisted thee; and the right hand of my just, man, has taken thy defence. Behold, all that fight against thee, shall be confounded and put to shame; thou shalt seek thy rebels, and shalt not find them: they shall be as tho' they were not, for that I am thy Lord and God."

* So proves St. Aug. l. 2. de pec. mor. cap. 6.

Isaiah 41.

Behold here a full victory promised over our rebels, by the help of the right hand of God's just man; that is, a full conquest over our disordinate passions and temptations, by the aid of the grace of *JESUS CHRIST*. And altho' it is not here promised that these rebels will be taken quite away, but only be conquer'd and confounded; yet it is said, *That they shall be as though they were not.* Whereby is signified, that they shall not hinder us in the way of our salvation, but rather advance and further the same, if we will. For as wild beasts, which of their own nature are fierce, and would rather hurt than help mankind, being'master'd and made tame, become very serviceable and necessary for our uses: so these rebellious passions of ours, which of themselves would utterly overthrow us, being once subdued and mortified by God's grace, and our own diligence, stand us in singular stead towards the practice and exercise of all kinds of virtues. As for example, choler or anger to the kindling of zeal; hatred, to the extirpation of sin; a haughty mind, to the contemning of the world; love, to the embracing of all great and heroical attempts, in consideration of the benefits received from God. Besides this,

A similitude, shewing how passions, when they are moderated, may be profitable.

the very conflict and combat it self in subduing these passions, is left us for our greater good: that is, for the exercise of our patience, humility, merit, and victory in this life; and for our glory and crown in the life to come, as *St. Paul* affirm'd of himself, and confirm'd to all others by his example.

Excuses of
slothful
Christians.

P. ov. 24,
26.

Ibid. 20.

Ibid. 24.

Now then let the slothful Christian say, *A lion is in the way, and a lioness in the passage*, for which he dares not stir out of doors. Let him cry, *because of the cold, he will not plow*. Let him excuse himself, that it is uneasy to labour, and therefore cannot purge his vineyard from nettles and thistles, nor build any wall about the same: that is, let him say, that his passions are strong, and therefore he cannot conquer them: his body is delicate, and therefore he dares not put it to labour: the way of a virtuous life is hard and uneasy, and therefore he cannot apply himself to it. Let him say all this and much more, which idle and slothful Christians are accustom'd to bring for their excuse. Let him allege the same as much, and as often as he will; it is but an excuse, and a false excuse, most dishonourable to the force of Christ's holy grace, purchased by his bitter passion, that now his yoke should be unpleasant, seeing he has made it sweet; that now his burden should be heavy, seeing he has made it light; that now his commandments should be grievous seeing his divine majesty affirms the contrary; that now we should be in servitude of our passions, seeing he has by his grace deliver'd us, and made us truly free. *If God be for us, who is against us?* says the Apostle? *Our Lord is my illumination and my salvation*, says holy David, *Whom shall I fear? our Lord is the protector of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? ----- If camps stand together against me, my heart shall not fear*. And what is the reason? Because thou art with me, O Lord, thou fightest on my side; thou assistest me with thy grace; by help and assistance whereof, I shall have the victory, tho' all the squadrons of my enemies, that is, of the flesh,

Mat. 11.

Rom. 8.

Psalms 26.

Psalms 22.

flesh,

flesh, the world and the devil, should at once rise *1 John 5.* against me. Nay, I shall not only have the victory, but I shall have it also most easily, and with all pleasure, comfort and delight. For thus much signifies *St. John*: when having said, that the commandments of Christ are not grievous, he infers presently, as the cause thereof, *Because all that is born of God, overcomes the world*: that is, the grace and heavenly assistance which is derived and sent us from God above, does both conquer the world, with all the difficulties and temptations thereof; as also make the commandments of almighty God most easy unto us, and a virtuous life very sweet and pleasant. And thus much of the first principal help that makes the path of a virtuous life easy; I mean God's holy grace inherent in man's soul, which is the off-spring and fountain of all other helps that ensue.

The second thing that makes this yoke so sweet, this burden so light, and this way of God's commandments so pleasant to resolute men, is vehemency of love; love, I mean, of God whose commandments we take in hand. For every man can easily tell, that has experienced in himself, what an irresistible force the passion of love contains, and how it makes the very greatest pains that are in this world most easy. What makes, for example, the mother take such incessant pains in the bringing up her child, and undergo with comfort so much labour, as she does, but only love? what causes the wife to sit so attentive at the bed's side of her husband, when he is sick, but only love? what moves the beasts and birds of the air, to spare from their own food, and to indanger their own lives, to feed and defend their little ones, but only the great force and puissance of love? *St. Augustine* prosecutes, this point at large by many other examples; as of merchants who expose themselves to the dangers of the sea for love of gain; of hunters, who suffer the inclemency of the weather for love of game; of soldiers, that refuse

The second help is vehemency of love.

See *St. Augustine* of this matter. *Serm. 9. de verb. dom.*

no danger for love of spoil. And he adds in the end:
 “ That if the love of man can be so great towards
 “ creatures, as to make great labours easy, and seem
 “ not labours, but rather pleasures; how much more
 “ ought the love of good men towards God, make all
 “ the pains and labours they take in his service, appear
 “ comfortable.”

The great
force of
love be-
tween
Christ and
his ser-
vants.

This extream love was the cause and reason, why all those intolerable pains and afflictions which our Saviour Christ suffer'd for our sake, seem'd nothing to him. And this love also was the reciprocal cause, why the numberless labours and tribulations, which zealous Christians from the beginning have suffer'd for him their Lord and Master, seem'd nothing to them. Imprisonments, torments, loss of honours, goods and life, have seem'd meer trifles to innumerable servants of God in respect of this fervent and burning love. This love drew multitudes of virgins, and tender children, to offer themselves in time of persecution to all kind of dreadful torments, out of a zealous affection towards him, who in the cause was persecuted. This love caused holy *Apollonia* of *Alexandria*, being brought to the fire, to slip out of the hands of those that led her, and joyfully to run into the same, of her own accord. This love forced blessed *Ignatius*, the Martyr (when he was condemn'd to beasts, and fear'd lest they should refuse to tare his body, as they had refused to hurt divers Martyrs before him) to say, that he would rather provoke them to pull and tare his body in pieces.

The love
of God's
command-
ments.

Such are the effects, of fervent love, which even makes the things that in this world, are most difficult and dreadful of themselves, to appear very easy, sweet and pleasant; and much more the laws and commandments of almighty God, which in themselves are most just, reasonable, holy, and easy. *Da amantem*, says *St. Augustine* speaking of this matter, *& sentit quod dico: Si autem frigido loquor, nescit quod loquor*: give me a man that is in love with God, and he feels this

Tract. 26.
in Joan.

to be true ; but if I talk to a cold Christian, he understands not what I say. And this is the reason why our blessed Saviour talking of the keeping of his commandments, repeats so many times this word Love, as the only sure ground whereon their whole regard, reverence, and observation depends ; for want of which love among men in this life, the most part of the world neither respects, nor keeps them. And hence it is, that our same Saviour used these and other like speeches :

If you love me, keep my commandments : and again, *He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me.* And yet further, *If one loves me, he will keep my word.*-----*He that loves me not, keeps not my words.* In which last place some note, that to him that

loves, he said, *He will keep my word*, in the singular number ; because to such a one, all his commandments

An observation.

are but one commandment, according to the saying of St. Paul : *Love therefore is the fulness of the law*, because it comprehends all in all. But to him that loves

Rom. 13.

not, Christ says, *Keeps not my words* in the plural number, signifying thereby, that they are both many and heavy to him : because he wants love, which should make them few and easy. The effect of which point, St. John also expresses, when he says : *This is the charity*

1 John 5.

of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not heavy. That is to say, they are not heavy to him, who has love ; otherwise no marvel they appear most heavy : for every thing appears burdensom, and intolerable, which we do against our liking. And by this also, dear brother, thou mayst make a conjecture, whether the true love of thy Lord and Saviour be in thee or not.

And these are two means, whereby the life of virtuous men is made easy in this world. There follow divers others, to the end that these negligent excusers may see, how unjust and untrue their excuse is, concerning the pretended hardness of living in God's service :

The third help is peculiar light of understanding.

- service: which on the contrary is fill'd with infinite priviledges of comfort, above the life of the most prosperous sinners in this world. Whereof one is a certain special and peculiar light of understanding, ap-
Prov. 9. pertaining to the just, and call'd in Scripture, *Prudentia Sanctorum*, the wisdom of Saints; which is nothing else but a certain sparkle of heavenly wisdom, bestow'd by singular priviledge upon the virtuous for the direction of their life, whereby they receive most comfortable light and understanding in spiritual affairs, concerning their own and other men's salvation, and things necessary thereunto. Of which knowledge the Prophet
Psal. 16. *David* meant when he said: *Thou hast made the ways of life known to me.* As also when he said of himself:
Psal. 118. *Above ancients, I have understood.* And again in another place: *The uncertain and bidden things of thy wisdom, thou hast made manifest unto me.* This is that most excellent light wherewith St. *John* said, that Christ our
1 John 1. Saviour enlightens his true servants; as also that unction of the Holy Ghost, which the same Apostle teaches to be given to the godly, thereby to instruct them in all things requisite for their salvation. This in like manner is that writing of God's law in mens hearts, which he
Jere. 31. promised so long ago by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, and is perform'd in the time of grace; as also the instruction of men, immediately from God himself, foretold by
Isaiab 54. the Prophet *Isaiab*. And finally, this is that sovereign understanding of the law, commandments, and justifications of almighty God, which holy *David* so much desired, and so often demanded in that most divine *Psal. 118.* *Blessed are the immaculate in the way* (that is, in this life) *who walk in the law of our Lord.*
- The great comfort of internal light. By this heavenly light of understanding, and by this supernatural illumination imparted to the good for their direction; the way of virtue is made very easy and exceeding comfortable. For as in bodily sight and

in voyages of this world, it falls out, that he who has good eyes and sees perfectly, goes on his way with far greater alacrity, joy and security, than does another that either wants that sense, or has it very dim: so in the course of our soul in this life, it is of no less importance and comfort, but rather of much more, for a man to have this celestial understanding for the governing of himself in order to his salvation; that is, to know what he does, see where he walks, discern whither he goes, conceive what he expects, and to be in that happy state whereof St. Paul says: *The spiritual man judges all things.* 1 Cor. 2. Whereas in the mean time the carnal and sensual man, as the same Apostle testifies, is so blind, that he can *perceive not those things that are of the spirit of God.* Of which sort of men the Prophet *Isaiab* says in their own person expressing their misery: *We have groped as blind men for the wall:---We have stumbled at mid-day as in darkness.* Isaiab 59. By which words the exceeding great calamity of wicked men, who see not where they go, what state they are in, how far off, or how near they are to perdition, but do live in continual darkness and most uncomfortable blindness, is declared to us. Which they confess also in another place of holy Scripture, saying: *The light of justice has not shined to us and the sun of understanding rose not to us; we are wearied in the way of iniquity.* Sap. 5. The want then of this heavenly light is tiresome and miserable to the wicked, and consequently the enjoying thereof most comfortable to the virtuous.

Now then to proceed, another principal matter which makes the way of virtue easy, and pleasant to them that walk therein, is a certain hidden and secret consolation which God infuses into the hearts of them that truly serve him. I call it *secret and hidden*, because it is known to none but such only as have felt and received part thereof. For which cause, Christ himself calls it: *Hidden manna*, known to them alone that do enjoy it. To which effect also the Prophet

The fourth help is internal consolation. Apoc. 2.

Pſalm 30. phet David ſaid to almighty God: *How great is the multitude of thy ſweetneſs, O Lord, which thou haſt hid for them that fear thee.* And again in another place: *Voluntary rain ſhalt thou ſeparate, O God, to thine inheritance.* And almighty God himſelf promiſes to a devout ſoul by the Prophet *Hofea*: *I will lead her aſide into the wilderneſs, and will ſpeak unto her heart*: that is I will comfort her. By all which ſayings is ſignified to us, that this conſolation is a ſecret priviledge beſtow'd only upon the virtuous, that the carnal hearts of wicked men have no part or portion therein.

The force
and ſweet-
neſs of this
conſolation
Pſal. 35.
and 64.

But now, how exceeding great and ineſtimable the ſweetneſs of this heavenly wine is to them that taſte it, no tongue of man or Angels can expreſs. A certain conjecture only may be made by the words of holy *David*, who attributes to it ſufficient force to inebriate all that taſte thereof; that is to ſay, to take from them all ſenſe and delectation in terreſtrial pleaſures, as it did from *St. Peter*, who when he received but a drop or two thereof upon mount *Thabor*, at his Maſter's tranſfiguration, forgot himſelf preſently, and talked like a man diſtracted, touching the building of tabernacles there, and reſting in that place for ever. This is, that torrent of pleaſure, as the Prophet calls it, which coming from the mountains of heaven, waters, by ſecret ways and paſſages, the hearts and ſpirits of the godly, and inebriates them with the unſpeakable joy, which it derives to them. This is a kind of taſte of the very joys of heaven in this life, beſtow'd upon good men, to comfort and encourage them in their way, and to keep them from fainting. For as merchants deſirous to ſell their goods, are content oftentimes to let you ſee and handle, and ſometimes alſo taſte the ſame, if the nature thereof ſo require, thereby the ſooner to induce you to buy: even ſo almighty God, being very careful, and willing to ſell us the joys of heaven, is content to impart a certain taſte beforehand to ſuch as he ſees are willing to buy

A ſimili-
tude ex-
preſſing
the cauſe
why God
gives this
conſolation
Apoc. 3.

buy, thereby to make them willing to lay down the price, and not to stick to pay, even more labour than he requires. This is that exceeding joy and jubilee in the hearts of just men, which the Prophet speaks of when he says: *The voice of exultation and of salvation in the tabernacles of the just.* And again; *Blessed is that people that knows jubilation.* That is, that people which has experienced this exceeding joy and pleasure of internal consolation. St. Paul had tasted it when he writ these words, amidst all his labours for *JESUS CHRIST*: *I am replenish'd with consolation; I do exceedingly abound in joy, in all our tribulation.* What can be spoken, dear brother, more effectually than this, to shew the divine force of this spiritual consolation?

Psal. 117.

Psal. 88.

2 Cor. 7.

But thou wilt here ask me perhaps, if this be so, why being a Christian as others, thou hast never yet tasted of this consolation? whereunto I answer, that, as it has been shew'd before, this is a chosen dew, provided for God's inheritance only. This is wine of God's own cellar, laid up for his spouse alone; that is, for the devout soul dedicated to God's service. The soul that is drown'd in sinful pleasures and delights of this world, cannot be partaker of this rare benefit, nor the heart that is replenish'd with carnal cares and worldly thoughts. For as God's ark and the idol *Dagon* could not stand together upon one altar; so cannot Christ and the world stand together in one heart. God sent not the pleasant manna to the people of *Israel* as long as their flour and chibbols of *Ægypt* lasted: neither will he send this heavenly consolation to thee, dear brother, until thou hast rid thy self, at least in part, of the vanities of the world. He is a prudent merchant, tho' liberal. He will not give a taste of his treasure, where he knows there is no will to buy or purchase. Resolve thy self once to serve him, and thou shalt then feel this heavenly joy, whereof I talk, as many thousands before thee have done, and never yet any man was herein deceived. *Moses* first ran out of *Ægypt* to the hills of *Madian*,

The way
to come to
spiritual
consolation
Psal. 67.

Exod. 16.

Worldly
consola-
tions and
heavenly,
stand not
well toge-
ther.
Exod. 2.

Madian, before God appear'd to him; and so must thy soul leave the vanities of the world before she can hope for these consolations.

Beginners
chiefly
cherish'd
by God.

But if thou wouldst resolve thy self effectually, and once offer thy self throughly to his divine service; then, no doubt, but thou wouldst find most sweet and merciful entertainment above all expectation, notwithstanding thy former evil life and sins whatsoever. For such is the abundant goodness of his divine majesty, for the encouraging all men to repair unto him; that he always shews more particular and tender love towards them that come newly to his service, than to others who have served him a longer time. Which is most evidently signified by the parable of the prodigal son, whom the good father cherish'd with much more tenderness and solitude, than he did the elder brother, who had served him continually. And the causes hereof are two: the one for joy of the new gotten servant, as is express'd by *St. Luke* in the Gospel; the other, lest he finding no consolation at the beginning, should turn back to *Ægypt* again; as God by a figure in the children of *Israel* declares most manifestly, in these words: When *Pharaoh*, had permitted the people of *Israel* to depart out of *Ægypt*, God brought them not by the country of the *Philistines*, which was the nearest way, thinking with himself, lest perhaps it might repent them, if they should see wars straightways rise against them, and so should return into *Ægypt* again. Behold here the cause why almighty God would not presently permit war and desolation to fall upon his people, after they were departed out of *Ægypt*, lest they should repent them, and so turn back again. What fatherly heart can express a more tender and inflamed love than this?

The fifth
help is the
peace of
conscience.
2 Cor. 1.

Yet to go forward: after this priviledge of internal consolation, ensues another, making the service of God also pleasant; and this is the testimony of a good conscience, whereof, blessed *St. Paul* made so great account,

that

that he call'd it his glory. And the Holy Ghost says of it further, by the mouth of the wise man: A secure mind and a good conscience, is as it were a perpetual feast. *Prov. 15.* Out of which we may infer, that the virtuous man having always this secure mind and peace of conscience, lives always in festival joy and joyful feasting. Now then how is this life hard or unpleasant, as you imagine? on the contrary, the wicked man having his conscience vex'd with the privy and guilt of many sins, is always a torment to himself; as we read that the conscience of wicked *Cain* was, after he had slain his own brother; and of *Antiochus*, for his wickedness done to *Jerusalem*; and of *Judas*, for his treason against his Master: and this is generally true in regard to all wicked men. The reason whereof the holy Scripture gives in another place, when it says, All wickedness is full of fear, giving testimony of damnation against it self; and therefore a troubled conscience always presumes cruel matters. That is to say, presumes cruel things to be imminent over it self, as it makes account to have deserved. *Eliphas* one of the friends of holy *Job*, sets forth most lively, this miserable state of wicked men's consciences: A wicked man says he, is proved all the days of his life, tho' the time be uncertain how long he shall play the tyrant. *Job 15.* The sound of each terror is always in his ears, and altho' it be in time of peace, yet he always suspects some treason against him. He believes not that he can rise again from darkness to light, expecting on every side the sword to come upon him. When he sits down to eat, he remembers that the day of darkness is ready at hand for him; tribulation terrifies him, and anguish of mind environs him, even as a king is environ'd with soldiers when he goes to war. Thus he. *The trouble of an evil conscience.*

Can any thing be express'd more effectually, loving brother, than this matter is here set down in holy Writ it self? what creature can be imagined more miserable than this man, who has such a butchery and slaughter-

The say-
ing of St.
Chrysostom
of a wicked
conscience.
Hom. l. 8.
Ad pop.
Antioch.

Prov. 28.

Ibid.

slaughter-house within his own breast and heart? what fears, what anguishes, what despair is here declared? *St. Chrysostom* discourses most excellently upon this point. “Such is the custom of sinners, says he, that they suspect all things, insomuch that they fear their own shadows; they are afraid at every little noise, and they think every man that comes towards them, comes against them. If men talk together; they think they speak of their sins. Such a thing is sin, that it betrays it self, tho’ no man accuse it: it holds a sinner always in extream fear, altho’ there is no appearance of any danger nigh him. Hear how notably holy Writ describes this fear of sinners, and the just man’s liberty: The wicked man flies, tho’ no man pursues him; because he has within his own conscience an accuser that pursues him, which accuser he always carries about with him. And as he cannot fly from himself, so he cannot fly from his accuser, that rests within his conscience; where-soever he goes, he is pursued, beaten, and whipp’d by the same, and his wound is incurable. But the just man is not so: The just, says *Solomon*, is as confident as a lion.” Hitherto are the words of *St. Chrysostom*.

S E C T. III.

Of five other helps and comforts to the same effect.

The sixth
help is con-
fident hope

Rom. 5.

BUT besides what has been alleged before, we will take notice of another prerogative of a virtuous life, which is a most lively hope and confidence of eternal salvation, this being one of the greatest treasures and richest jewels that Christians have left them in this life. For by this we pass through all afflictions, tribulations and adversities most joyfully. By this we say with *St. Paul*, *We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation works patience, and patience probation,*
and

and probation hope, and hope confounds not. This is our most strong and mighty comfort: this is our sure anchor in all our most tempestuous times and storms, according to what the same holy Apostle assures, when he says, That it is a most strong solace and comfort to us, when we make our refuge to the hope that is proposed by God that cannot lie, which hope we hold as the sure and infallible anchor of our soul. This is that noble helmet of salvation, as the same Apostle calls it, which bears off all the blows that this world can lay upon us. And finally, this is the only comfort to the heart of a virtuous man; that, come life, or come death, come health, or come sickness, come wealth, or come poverty, come prosperity, or come adversity, come never so violent seas and waves of persecution; he sits down quietly, and says calmly with the Prophet: My trust is in God, and therefore I fear not what flesh can do to me. Nay further with holy *Job*, amidst all his miseries, he utters this most confident speech: if God should kill me, yet would I put my trust in him. And this is as the Scripture said before, to be as confident as a lion: whose property is to shew most courage when he is in greatest peril, and near to most troubles.

But now as the Holy Ghost says: the wicked man cannot say thus, they have no part in this confidence, no interest in this consolation, because the hope of wicked men is vain, and shall perish. And the expectation of wicked men is fury. And the reason hereof is two-fold. First, because wicked men, tho' they say the contrary in words, they do not indeed put their trust and confidence in God, but in the world, in their riches, in their strength, friends, authority, and finally in the deceitful arm of man: even as the Prophet expresses in their persons when he says: *We have made lying our hope, and with lying we are protected*: that is, we have put our hope in transitory things which have deceived us. And this is yet more clearly express'd by

Heb. 6.

Ephes. 6.

1 Thes. 5.

Psalms 55.

Job 13.

Psalms 1.

Prov. 10.

Prov. 11.

Jer. 17.

Isaiah 28.

Sep. 5.

the Scripture, saying: The hope of wicked men is as chaff, which the wind blows away: and as a bubble of water which a storm disperses, and as the smoke which the wind blows about: and as the remembrance of a guest that stays not one day in his inn. By all which metaphors, the Holy Ghost expresses to us, both the vanity of things wherein the wicked put their trust; and how the same fails them after a little time, upon every small occasion of adversity that happens.

Isaiah 30,
& 36.

Jer. 17.
48.

Prov. 11.

Job 27.

The wicked man's
hope is not
in God.

This is what God means, when he threatens so terribly against those who go into *Ægypt* for help, and put their confidence in the strength of *Pharaoh*, accursing them for the same; and promising, that it shall turn to their confusion; which is properly to be understood of all those, who put their chief confidence in worldly helps; as all wicked men do, whatsoever they say or dissemble to the contrary. For which cause also of dissimulation, they are call'd hypocrites by *Job*: for whereas the wise man says, *The hope of the impious shall perish.* *Job* says, *For what is the hypocrite's hope --- will God hear his cry when distress shall come upon him?* calling wicked men hypocrites: because they say, they put their hope in God, whereas indeed, they put it in the world. Which thing, not only Scripture, but also experience teaches. For whom does the wicked man consult in his affairs and doubts? with God principally, or with the world? whom does he seek in his afflictions? whom does he call upon in his sickness? from whom hopes he to receive comfort in his adversities? to whom does he give thanks in his prosperities? When a worldly man takes any work of importance in hand, does he first consult with God about the event thereof? does he fall down on his knees and ask his aid? does he refer it wholly or principally to his honour? If he does not, how can he hope for aid from him? how can he repair to him for assistance in the dangers and difficulties that fall out about the same?

how

how can he have any confidence in him, who has no part at all in that work? It is hypocrisy then, as *Job* truly says, for this man to affirm, that his confidence is in God, whereas indeed it is in the world, it is in *Pharaoh*, it is in *Ægypt*, it is in the arm of man, it is in a lie. He builds not his house with the wise man upon a rock: but with the fool upon sands: and therefore as Christ well assures him: *The rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat against that house and it fell:* (which will be at the hour of death) *and the fall thereof was great.* Great, The fall of a wicked man's house. for the great change which he will see; great, for the great horror which he will conceive; great, for the great misery which he will suffer; great, for the unspeakable joys of heaven lost; great, for the eternal pains of hell incur'd: great every way, assure thy self, dear brother, or else the mouth of God would never have used this word, great. And this is sufficient for the first reason, why the hope of wicked men is vain; because indeed they put it not in God, but in the world.

The second reason is, because altho' they should put their hope in God, yet, living wickedly, it is vain, and rather to be call'd presumption than hope. For the understanding whereof, it is to be noted, that as there are two kinds of faiths recounted in holy Scripture, the one a dead faith without good works, that is, which believes all you say of Christ, but yet observes not his commandments: the other a lively and justifying faith, which not only believes, but also works by charity, as *St. Paul's* words are: so there are two hopes following these two faiths: the one of the good, proceeding from a good conscience, whereof I have spoke before: the other wicked, resting in a guilty conscience, which is indeed no true hope, but rather presumption. This *St. John* proves plainly, when he says: *If our heart reprehend us not, we have confidence towards God:* That is, if our heart be not guilty of a wicked life. And the words immediately follow-

Wicked men cannot hope in God.

1 John 3.

ing more plainly express the same, which are these: *Whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of him; because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing before him.* St. Paul affirms the same, when

1 Tim. 1.

St. Au-
gustine's
saying of
hope, l. 1.
Christ.
c. 40.

he says: *The end of the precept is charity, from a pure heart, and a good conscience.* Which words St. Augustine expounding in divers places of his works, proves at large, that without a good conscience, there can be no true hope conceived. “ St. Paul, says he, “ adds, *from a good conscience*, because of hope: for “ he who has the contradiction of an evil conscience, “ despairs to attain that which he believes.” And again, “ Every man's hope is in his conscience; ac- “ cording as he feels himself to love God.” And

In proof.

1 Tim. 3.

again, in another book. “ The Apostle puts a good “ conscience for hope; for he only hopes who has a “ good conscience: and he whom the guilt of an evil “ conscience pricks, retires back from hope, and hopes “ nothing but his own damnation.”

The se-
venth help,
is, freedom
of mind.
John 8.

I might here repeat a great many privileges and prerogatives of a virtuous life, which make the same easy, pleasant and comfortable, but that this chapter grows long: and therefore I will only touch (as it were by the by) two or three of the most principal points, which notwithstanding would require large discourses, to declare the same according to their dignity.

2 Cor. 3.

The first whereof is the inestimable privilege of liberty and freedom, which the virtuous enjoy above the wicked, according to what Christ promises in these words: *If you will abide in my words, you shall be my Disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free:* which words St. Paul, as it were expounding, says: *Where the spirit of our Lord is, there is liberty.* To wit, liberty from tyranny and thralldom of our corrupt sensuality and concupiscence, call'd by divines, the inferior part of our soul; whereunto the wicked are so enslaved, that never was any bond-slave more, to a most merciless, cruel, and bloody

bloody tyrant. This in part may be conceived by this one example. If a man had married a rich, beautiful, and noble gentlewoman, adorn'd with all endowments which can be desired in that sex; and yet notwithstanding should be so befotted and entangled with the love of some foul and dishonest beggar, or servile maid of his house, as to abandon for her sake, the company and friendship of his said wife, to spend his time in dalliance and service of this base woman: to run, to go, stand still at her appointment: to put all his livings and revenues into her hands, for her to consume and spoil at her pleasure: to deny her nothing, but to wait and serve her at a beck, yea, and to compel his said wife to do the same; would you not think this man's life miserable and most servile? and yet surely the manner of servitude whereof we talk, is far greater and more intolerable than this. For no woman, or other creature in this world, is or can be so beautiful or noble as reason is, to whom man by his creation was espoused; which notwithstanding we see abandon'd, contemn'd, and rejected by him for the love of sensuality, her handmaid, and a most deform'd creature: in whose love notwithstanding, or rather servitude, we see wicked men so drown'd that they serve her day and night with all pains, perils, and expences; and also constrain reason her self to be subject to all the becks and commands of this new tyrannical and vile mistress. For why do they labour? why do they heap riches together, but only to serve their sensuality and her desires? wherefore do they beat their brains, but only to satisfy this cruel tyrant and her passions?

And if you will see how cruel and pitiful this servitude truly is, consider only some particular example of the same. Take a man whom she over-rules in any passion: as for example, in the lust of the flesh, what pains does he take for her? how does he labour? how does he drudge in servitude? how potent and strong does he feel her tyranny? remember the strength

An example expressing the bondage of wicked men given to sensuality.

The misery of a man ruled by sensuality.

2 Reg. 12.
Jud. 14.
3 Reg. 11.

of *Sampson*; the wisdom of *Solomon*; the sanctity of
of *David*, overthrown by tyranny. *Jupiter*, *Mars*,
and *Hercules*, who for their valiant acts, otherwise were
accounted gods of the heathens; were they not over-
come, and made slaves by the inchantment of this ty-
rant? and if you will further see of what strength she
is, and how cruelly she executes the same upon those
that Christ has not deliver'd from her bondage; con-
sider, for example, the sad case of some disloyal wife,
who tho' she knows that by committing adultery, she
runs into a thousand dangers and inconveniencies; as
the loss of God's favour, the hatred of her husband, the
dangers of punishment, the offence of her friends, the
utter dishonour of her person, if it be known; and
finally, the ruin and peril of body and soul: yet to
satisfy this tyrant, she will venture to commit the sin,
notwithstanding any dangers or perils whatsoever. Nei-
ther is it only in this one point of carnal lust wherein
sensuality has such a tyrannical dominion over them
that intral themselves to her, but also in every other
passion. Look upon an ambitious or vain-glorious
man; see how he serves his mistress, with what care
and diligence he attends her commands; which is no-
thing else, but to run after a little wind, to pursue a little
feather flying before him in the air. You will see
that he omits nothing, no time, no circumstance for
the gaining thereof. He rises early, goes late to bed,
works by day, studies by night; here he flatters,
there he dissembles, here he stoops, there he looks
big: here he makes friends, prevents enemies, and re-
fers all his actions to this only end, and applies all his
other concerns, all the order of his life, his conver-
sation, his apparel, his house, his table, his horses,
his servants, his talk, his behaviour, his jests, his
looks, and his very walking in the streets, to this same
purport.

An ambi-
tious man.

A covet-
tous man.

In like manner he that serves his sensuality in the
passion of covetousness, what a miserable slavery does
he

he endure; his heart being so mured in prison with money, that he can only think, talk, dream thereof, and imagine new ways to get the same, and nothing else! if you should see a Christian in slavery amongst the *Turks*: tied in the galley by the legs with chains, there to serve by rowing for ever, you could not but take compassion of his case? and shall we not take compassion of the misery of this man, who is captive to a more base creature than is the *Turk*, or any other rational creature; that is, to a piece of metal, in whose prison he lies bound, not only by the feet, so that he cannot go any where against the commodity and command of the same, but also by the hands, by the mouth, by the eyes, by the ears, and by the heart; so that he can neither speak, see, hear, or think, but in service of this mammon? Was there ever servitude so great as this? Does not then Christ very truly say, *every one that commits sin, is the servant of sin*. Does not St. Peter say well, *For wherewith a man is overcome, of that he is the slave also?*

John 8.
2 Peter 2.

From this slavery the virtuous are deliver'd, by the power of Christ, and by his assistance; so that they rule over their passions and sensuality, and are not ruled thereby. This God promised by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, saying, *And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have broken the chains of their yoke, and shall have deliver'd them out of the hand of those that rule over them*. And this benefit holy *David* acknowledged in himself, when he used these most affective words to almighty God: *O Lord, because I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid, thou hast broken my bands, I will sacrifice to thee the best of praise*. This benefit St. Paul also acknowledged when he said, That our old man was crucified, to the end the body of sin may be destroy'd, and we be no more in servitude to sin: understanding by the *old man*, and the *body of sin*, our concupiscence, mortified in the virtuous, by the grace of Christ.

The liberty a man has by serving God.

Ezek. 34.

Psal. 150.

Rom. 6.

The eighth
help is
peace of
mind.

Psal. 75.

Psal. 118.

Isaiah 48.

Psal. 13.

Rom. 11.

Isaiah 57.

James 3.

Two causes

of disquiet-

ness in

wicked

men.

Prov. 30.

A simili-
tude.

After this privilege of freedom, follows another, of no less importance than this: and that is, a certain heavenly peace, serenity, and tranquillity of mind, according to the saying of the Prophet: *His place is made in peace.* And in another place, *There is much peace to them that love thy law.* And on the contrary, the Prophet *Isaiah* oftentimes repeats this terrible sentence, from the mouth of almighty God himself: *There is no peace to the impious, says our Lord.* And another Prophet says of the same men: *Destruction and infelicity in their ways, and they have not known the way of peace.* The reason of this difference has been declared heretofore; and comes from the diversity of good and evil men in conquering their passions. For the virtuous having now, by the aid of Christ's holy grace, subdued these passions, do pass on their life most sweetly and calmly under the guide of reason, without any perturbations to endanger them in the greatest occurrences of this miserable life. But the wicked, not having mortified any part of their passions, are toss'd and tumbled by the same, as by vehement and contrary winds. And therefore, their state is compared by *Isaiah* to a tempestuous sea, that never is quiet: and by St. *James*, to a city or country, where the inhabitants are at war and sedition among themselves. And the causes hereof are two. First, because these passions of concupiscence being many, and almost infinite in number, do lust after infinite things, and are never satisfied, but are like those blood-suckers which the wise man speaks of, that always cry, *bring, bring,* and never say *it suffices.* As for example, tell me when is the ambitious man satisfied with honour? or the incontinent man with carnality? or the covetuous man with money? never truly. And therefore as that mother cannot but be greatly afflicted, who should have many children crying to her at once for meat, she having no food at all, or not sufficient to give them: so the wicked man being greedily call'd on without ceasing,

ceasing, by almost infinite passions, to yield to their desires, must needs be vex'd and tormented, especially, being not able to satisfy any one of the least of their petitions.

Another cause of vexation in these men is, because these passions of inordinate concupiscence are oftentimes contrary the one to the other, and demand most opposite and contrary things, representing to us most lively the confusion of *Babel*, where one tongue spoke against another, and that in diverse and contrary languages. So we see oftentimes that the desire of honour says to his master, *spend here* : but the passion of avarice says, *hold thy hand*, lechery says, *venture here* : but pride says, *no, it may turn to thy dishonour*. Anger says, *revenge thy self here* ; but ambition says, *it is better to dissemble*. And finally, here is fulfill'd that which the Prophet says, *I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city*. Iniquity, because all the demands of these passions are most unjust, being against reason : contradiction, because one contradicts the others in their demands. From all which miseries, God has deliver'd the just, by giving them his peace, *Phil. 4. which passes all understanding*, as the Apostle says ; and which the world can neither give nor taste, as Christ himself affirms. And thus, many causes may be alleged now, besides many other which I pass over, to justify the verity of our Saviour's words, affirming, *That his yoke is sweet and easy* : to wit, the assistance of grace, the love of God, the light of understanding, the internal consolation, the quiet of conscience, the confidence proceeding from thence, the liberty of soul and body, with the sweet rest and peace of our spirits, both towards God, our neighbours and our selves. By all which means, helps, privileges, and singular benefits, the virtuous are assisted above the wicked, as has been shew'd, and their way made easy, light, and pleasant.

The second cause.

Psalms 54.

Phil. 4.

John 4.

17. Mat. 10.

To

The ninth
reason is
expecta-
tion of re-
ward.

An exam-
ple.

Gen. 40,
41, 43.

To all which, we may yet adjoin one other great privilege, as the last, but not the least comfort to them that walk under the yoke of Christ's service; and this is the promise and most assured expectation of reward; to wit, of eternal glory and felicity to the good, and of everlasting damnation and torments unto the wicked. O good God, what a subject is this, to comfort the one, if their life is painful, and to afflict the other amidst the greatest pleasures and sweetest delights! The labourer when he thinks of his good pay at night, is encouraged to go through the heat of the day, tho' it be painful to him. Two that should pass together towards their country, the one to receive honour for good service done abroad, the other as prisoner to be arraign'd for treasons committed in foreign dominions against his sovereign, could not be alike merry in their inn upon the way. For, altho' he that stood in danger should sing, or make a shew of courage and comfort, and set a good face upon the matter; yet the other might well think, that his heart had many a check within him, as no doubt but wicked men have, when they think within themselves of the life to come. If *Joseph* and *Pharaoh's* baker, had known both their distinct lots in prison; to wit, that on such a day, one should be call'd to be made lord of *Agypt*, and the other to be hang'd, they could hardly have been alike merry whilst they lived together in the time of their imprisonment. The like may be said, and much more truly, of virtuous and wicked men in this world; for when the one does but think upon the day of death, which to him is to be the day of deliverance from his prison, his heart cannot but leap for joy, considering what is hereafter to happen to him. But the others are afflicted, and fall into melancholly and extream desolation, as often as mention or remembrance of death is offer'd: for they are sure, that it brings with it their everlasting doom, according as holy Scripture says:

The

The impious man being dead, there shall be no hope any more. Prov. 11.

If then, dear Christian, all these things be so; what should hinder thee now from making this resolution whereunto I exhort thee? wilt thou yet say, notwithstanding all this, that the matter is hard, and the way unpleasant? or wilt thou believe others that tell thee so, altho' they know less of the matter than thy self? believe rather the word and promise of thy Saviour Christ, who assures thee the contrary. Believe the reasons before alleged, which do prove it most evidently. Believe the testimonies of them who have experienced the matter in themselves: as, king *David*, *St. Paul*, *St. John* Evangelist, and others, whose testimonies I have alleged before, concerning their own experience. Believe many hundreds, who by the holy grace of God are converted daily in Christendom from a vicious life, to the perfect service of our Lord: all which protest, that themselves have found much more facility and comfort than either I have said in this place, or can say of the matter. Mat. 17.

And because perhaps thou mayst reply that such men as have experienced this in themselves, are not now living in the place where thou art, to give this testimony of their own experience: I can, and do assure thee upon my conscience before almighty God, that I have had conferences with no small number of such persons my self, and that to my singular comfort, in beholding the exceeding bountifulness of God's sweetness towards them in this case. Oh dear brother, no tongue can express what I have seen herein; and yet I saw not the least part of that which they felt inwardly. But yet this may I say, that they that attend in the Catholick Church to deal with souls in the holy Sacrament of Confession, are indeed those, of whom the Prophet says: That they work in multitude of waters, and do see the marvels of God in the depth. In the depth, I say, of mens consciences utter'd with infinity of tears, when The tenth help is the experience which others have had. Psal. 106.

when God touches the same with his holy grace. Believe me, good reader, for I speak in truth before our Lord *JESUS*, I have seen so great and exceeding consolation in divers great sinners after their conversion, that no heart can conceive it, and the hearts which received them were hardly able to contain the same: so abundantly did that heavenly dew distil down from the most liberal and bountiful hand of God.

Vid. pratum spirituale. SS. Patrum. Gotfr. in vita. Bern.

And that this may not seem strange to thee, thou must know, that it is recorded of a holy man call'd *Ephraim*, that he had so great consolations after his conversion, that he was often constrain'd to cry out to God: O Lord, retire thy hand from me a little, for my heart is not able to receive so much joy. And the like is written of *St. Bernard*, who for a certain time after his conversion from the world, remain'd as it were deprived of his senses, by the excessive consolation he had from God.

The example of *St. Cyprian*. *l. 1. cap. 1.*

However, if all this cannot move thee, but thou wilt still remain in thy distrust; hear the testimony of one, whom I am sure thou wilt not for shame discredit, especially speaking of his own experience: and this is the holy Martyr and Doctor *St. Cyprian*, who writing of the very same matter to a friend of his call'd *Donatus*, confesses that he was before his conversion, being yet a *Gentile*, of the same opinion that *Donatus* was now; to wit, that it was impossible for him to change his manners so easily, and to find such comfort in a virtuous life, as after he did, being accusom'd before, and habituated to the contrary; and so intitles the argument of his discourse: *Of the force of God's grace*, and begins his narration in this manner. "Take that which is first felt before it be learn'd, and that which is not gather'd by long tract of time, but is received in a moment, by the compendious influence of God's holy grace. When I lay in darkness and in that blind night of ignorance, whilst I floated hither and thither, as doubtful and wavering in this sea of the troublefom

St. Cyprian's doubts and difficulties of the force of God's grace.

“ troublefom world, being ignorant of my own life, and
 “ void both of truth and light ; I did efteem it hard and
 “ difficult, according to thefe manners of mine, that
 “ which God’s mercy did promife me for my falva-
 “ tion, that I might be born again into a new life,
 “ by the benefit of baptifm, and that laying afide the
 “ former corruption which before poffefs’d my body,
 “ I fhould be made new in mind and foul without dif-
 “ folution of my faid body.

“ This, I fay, feem’d to me impoffible : for how
 “ faid I to my felf, can fo great a conversion be ex-
 “ pected, how can that which by continuance has been
 “ made, as it were, natural ? and that which by long
 “ ufe is fo ingrafted, that now it is almoft impoffible
 “ to be removed, be fhaken off on the fudden ?
 “ when, faid I to my felf, will he learn parcimony,
 “ or to be fparing in diet, who is accuftom’d to large
 “ and delicate banquets ? and when will he, who is
 “ wont to fhine and glitter in precious apparel, in
 “ gold and purple, come down and be content to
 “ abafe himfelf to mean, and vulgar attire ? he that
 “ is delighted with honours and authority, and enfigns
 “ of rule and charge to be carried before him, cannot
 “ abide to be inglorious, and to lead a private life.
 “ Another that is accuftom’d to walk with a great train
 “ of clients and dependents, thinks it a great punifh-
 “ ment to be alone and folitary. And finally, he that
 “ is once entangled with the fnares and alluring baits
 “ of vice, can very hardly avoid, but that drunkennefs
 “ will provoke him ; pride will puff him up ; anger
 “ will inflame him ; covetoufnefs will difquiet him ;
 “ cruelty will fting him, ambition will draw him ; luft
 “ will precipitate and caft him down headlong.

Imagined
 impoffibi-
 lities.

“ This did I debate with my felf before my con-
 “ version, when I was entangled with infinite errors
 “ of my former life, and did not believe that I could
 “ be deliver’d from them, having fo given my felf
 “ over to their dominion, that I did now defpair
 of

“ of amendment. But after that these spots of my
 “ former life were once cleansed by the help of the holy
 “ baptism, and that the light of heaven came down in-
 “ to my purged and pure breast ; after the Holy Ghost
 “ coming from above did renew me by a second nati-
 “ vity, making me a new man : it is wonderful, how
 “ soon those things which were doubtful before, were
 “ made clear to me, and those things open’d, which
 “ were shut before, and those things did shine, which
 “ before were dusky and dark. It is wonderful, I say,
 “ how that which seem’d hard was now made easy,
 “ and that which was thought impossible appear’d now
 “ feasible : so that it might well appear, that what be-
 “ fore I felt in my self, was earthly, and born of the
 “ flesh, and subject to sin ; and that what now I felt,
 “ was quicken’d by almighty God, and endued with life
 “ by the Holy Ghost. Truly, thou know’st my
 “ friend *Donatus*, and canst remember together with
 “ me, that this new state of ours (I mean this death
 “ of sin and life of virtue) has taken from us of the
 “ one, and brought to us of the other. Thou know-
 “ est it, I say, neither is it convenient for me to
 “ brag of it ; for it is an odious thing to boast in a
 “ man’s own praises, altho’ in truth it cannot well be
 “ call’d boasting, but rather gratitude, whatsoever is
 “ not ascribed to the virtue or merit of man, but to
 “ the gift of almighty God, &c.”

What
 St. *Cyprian*
 felt after
 his conver-
 sion.

Thus far St. *Cyprian* ; who being so great a man, and
 having experienced both the states of vice and virtue,
 ought greatly to move us. And St. *Augustine* writes
 the very same thing of himself in his book of confessions ;
 shewing that his own passions and the devil would needs
 have persuaded him before his conversion, that he
 should never be able to abide the austerity of a virtuous
 life : especially in regard to continency from sins of
 the flesh, which notwithstanding he afterwards found
 both easy and pleasant, and without all difficulty. For
 which he breaks into these words, directed to almighty
 God

Lib. 6.
 Confess.
 cap. 12. 13.
 14.
 Ibid. lib.
 8. cap. 1.

God himself out of the Psalmist: "O my Lord, let *Psalm 34.*
 " me remember and confess thy mercies towards me :
 " let my very bones rejoice and say, O Lord, who is *Psalm 115.*
 " like unto thee? thou hast broken my chains and I
 " will sacrifice to thee a sacrifice of thanksgiving."
 These chains which the blessed man mentions, were
 the chains of concupiscence, wherewith he was bound
 in captivity as he there confesses, before his conversion;
 but presently thereupon he was deliver'd from the same,
 by the blessed help of God's most holy grace.

My counsel therefore to thee, gentle reader is, that
 seeing thou hast so many testimonies, examples, reasons,
 and promises of this matter, thou should at least prove
 once by thy own experience, whether this thing be true
 or not; especially, seeing it is a matter of so great im-
 portance, and so worthy thy trial: that is to say, a
 matter so nearly concerning thy eternal salvation, as it
 does. If a mean fellow should come to thee, and offer, *A simili-*
 for the hazarding of one crown of gold, to make thee *tude.*
 a thousand pound by alchimy; altho' thou shouldst
 suspect him for a cozeners, yet the hope of gain being
 so great, and the adventure of loss so small, thou
 wouldst go nigh for once, to venture and see the trial.
 And how much more shouldst thou do it then in this
 case, where, by proof thou canst lose nothing; and if
 thou speedest well, thou art sure to gain as much as
 God's kingdom, and the everlasting joy of heaven is
 worth.

S E C T. IV.

*Containing certain instructions and examples to
 help towards overcoming difficulties.*

AND now, altho' this great affair be such as I have
 declared before, and not such as the world and
 satan represent it to men; yet I cannot in this place, *Difficulties*
 dear Christian, but admonish thee of one thing, which *at the be-*
 the *ginning.*

the ancient Fathers and Saints of God, that have pass'd over this river before thee, I mean the river dividing between God's service and the world, do affirm of their own experience; and that is, that as soon as thou takest this work or resolution in hand, thou must expect many great encounters, strong impediments, sharp contradictions, and fierce temptations: thou must expect assaults, combats, and open war within thy self for a time. For this *St. Cyprian*, *St. Augustine*, *St. Gregory*, and *St. Bernard*, do affirm upon their own experience, notwithstanding they had the victory so easily, as has been said. This do *Cyril* and *Origen* shew in divers places at large upon like experience. This does *St. Hilary* prove both by reasons and examples. This does

Eccles. 2. the Scripture forwarn thee of, when it says, *Son, coming to the service of God, stand in justice and in fear, and prepare thy soul to temptation.* And the reason of this is, because the devil possessing thy soul quietly before, lay still, and sought only means to content the same by daily suggesting new delights of carnal and worldly pleasures. But when he sees that thou offerst to go from him, he begins straightways to rage, and to move sedition within thee, and to toss up and down both heaven and earth, before he will lose his kingdom in thy soul. This is evident by the example of him whom our Saviour Christ, coming down from the hill, after his transfiguration, deliver'd from a deaf and dumb spirit. For altho' this devil would seem neither to hear nor speak while he possess'd that body quietly; yet when Christ commanded him to go out, he both heard and cried out, and did so tear and rend that poor body, before he departed, that all the standers by thought that he had been dead. This also in figure was shew'd by the story of *Laban*, who never persecuted his son-in-law *Jacob*, till he would needs depart from him. And yet this was more plainly express'd in the proceeding of *Pharaoh*, who after once he perceived that the people of *Israel* meant to depart his kingdom,

never

Gen. 31.

never ceased grievously to afflict them, as *Moses* testifies, till God deliver'd them out of his hands, with the ruin and destruction of all their enemies, which all holy Doctors and Saints in God's Church have expounded to be the plain figure of the delivery of souls from the tyranny of the devil. *Exod. 5.*

And now if thou wouldst have a lively example of all that I have said before, I could allege thee many; but for brevity sake one only of *St. Augustine's* conversion shall suffice, testified by himself in his *books of Confession*. The conversion of
St. *Augustine*.

It is a marvellous example, and contains many most notable and comfortable points. And surely whosoever will but read the whole at large, especially in his sixth, seventh, and eighth books of his *Confessions*, will be much moved and instructed thereby. And I beseech the reader, to look over at least certain chapters of the eighth book, where this Saint's final conversion, after infinite combats is recounted. It would be too long to repeat all here, tho' indeed it is such a subject, that no man could ever be weary to hear it. There he shews how he was toss'd in his conflict between the flesh and the spirit; between God drawing on one side, and the world, the flesh, and the devil, holding back on the other. He went to *Simplicianus* a learned old man, and a devout Christian; he went to *St. Ambrose* bishop of *Milan*, and after his conference with them, he was more troubled than before. He consulted with his companions *Nebridius* and *Alipius*; but all could not ease him. One day after dinner there came into his house a christian courtier and captain, named *Pontinian*, and finding by chance *St. Paul's* epistles upon the board, where *St. Augustine* and his fellows were at play, by occasion thereof, fell into talk of spiritual matters; and among other things, to recite to them the life of *St. Anthony* the monk of *Ægypt*, and the infinite virtues and miracles of the same, which he had found in a book among Christians a little before, and thereby was himself converted to Christianity. Which story, after *St. Augustine* had

*L. 8. con.
11.*

Cap. 6.

H h

heard,

A monastery of monks at Milan, before St. Augustine's time.

heard, as also, that there was a monastery of those monks, without the walls of *Milan*, in which city this happen'd, and that they were nourish'd by St. *Ambrose* the bishop, whereof St. *Augustine* before this, knew nothing, he was much more afflicted than before: and after *Pontinian* was departed, withdrawing himself aside, had a most terrible combat with himself, whereof he writes thus: "What did I not say against my self in this conflict? how did I beat and whip my own soul, to make her follow thee, O Lord? but she held back, she refused, and excused herself; and when all her arguments were convicted, she remain'd in horror and fear, as of death, to be restrain'd from her loose custom of sin, whereby she had now consumed herself even unto death." After this he went into a garden with *Alipius* his companion, and there cried out to him. *Quod hoc est? Quid partimur? Surgunt indocti & Cælum rapiunt; & nos cum doctrinis nostris, sine corde, ecce ubi volutamur in carne & sanguine.* What is this, *Alipius*? what suffer we under the tyranny of sin? unlearned men, such as St. *Anthony* and others, do take heaven by violence; and we with all our learning, without hearts, behold how we lie grovelling in flesh and blood! and he goes forward in that place, shewing, the wonderful and almost incredible tribulations that he had in this fight that day. After this, he went further into an orchard, and there he had yet a greater conflict. For there all his pleasures past, represented themselves together before his eyes, saying to him, *Dimittesne nos, & à momento isto non erimus tecum ultra in æternum? &c.* What! wilt thou abandon us, and shall not we be with thee any more for ever, after this moment? shall it not be lawful for thee to do this and that any more hereafter? and then says St. *Augustine*: O Lord, turn from the mind of thy servant, to think of that filth which they objected to my soul. What filth! what shameful pleasures did they lay before my eyes! at length he says, that

Cap. 7.

Cap. 8.

Mark this gentle reader.

Cap. 12.

that after long and tedious combats, a marvellous tempest of weeping came upon him ; and being not able to resist any longer, he ran away from *Alipius*, and cast himself upon the ground under a fig-tree, and gave full scope to his eyes, which presently brought forth whole floods of tears. Which after they were a little past over, he began to speak to God in this sort, *Et tu Domine, usquequo ? quamdiu ? quamdiu cras & cras ? quare non modo ? quare non hac hora finis est turpitudinis meæ ?* O Lord, how long wilt thou suffer me thus ? how long, how long shall I say to-morrow ? why should I not do it now ? why should there not be an end of my filthy life, even at this instant ? And after this follows his final and miraculous conversion, together with the conversion of *Alipius* his companion : which because it is set down briefly by himself, I will recite his own words, which are as follow, immediately after those that went before.

Cap. 12.

Ibid.

“ I did talk, says he, in this sort to almighty God,
 “ and did weep most bitterly, with a deep contrition
 “ of my heart ; and behold, I heard a voice, as if it had
 “ been of some child, singing from some house near me,
 “ and oftentimes it repeated these words : *Take up and*
 “ *read, take up and read* : and straightways, I chang-
 “ ing my countenance, began to think most earnestly
 “ with my self, whether children, were wont to sing
 “ any such thing, in any kind of game that they used ;
 “ but I could never remember, that I had heard any
 “ such thing before. Wherefore repressing the force
 “ of my tears ; I rose up, interpreting no other thing,
 “ but that this voice came from heaven, to bid me
 “ open the book that I had with me, which was
 “ *St. Paul’s* epistles, and to read the first chapter that I
 “ should find. For I had heard before of *St. Anthony*,
 “ how he was admonish’d to his conversion, by hear-
 “ ing a sentence of the Gospel, which was read, when
 “ he by chance came into the church : and the sen-
 “ tence was : *Go and sell all thou hast, and give to*

St. Augustine’s final
conversion
by a voice
from hea-
ven.

St. Anthony’s con-
version.
Athanasius
in vit. Ant.
Mat. 19.

Rom. 13.

“ the poor, and thou shalt have a treasure in heaven,
 “ and come and follow me. Which saying, *St. Anthony*
 “ taking as spoken to himself in particular; was pre-
 “ sently converted to thee, O Lord, wherefore I went in
 “ haste to the place where *Alipius* fate, because I had
 “ left my book there, when I departed. I snatch’d
 “ it up, and open’d it, and read in silence the first
 “ chapter that offer’d it self to my eyes, and therein
 “ were these words: *Not in banquetting, or in drun-*
 “ *kennes; not in wantonness, and chamber-works;*
 “ *not in contention and emulation: but do you put on*
 “ *our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and do you not per-*
 “ *form the providence of flesh in concupiscences.*

“ Further than this sentence I would not read; nei-
 “ ther was it needful: for presently with the end of
 “ this sentence, as if the light of security had been pour’d
 “ into my heart, all the darkness of my doubtfulness
 “ fled away. Whereupon putting my finger, or some
 “ other sign, which now I remember not, upon the
 “ place; I closed the book, and with a quiet counte-
 “ nance open’d the whole matter to *Alipius*. And he
 “ by this means, utter’d also that vocation, which now
 “ wrought in him, which I before knew not. He
 “ desired that he might see what I had read, and I
 “ shew’d the place to him. He consider’d the whole,
 “ and went further also than I had read. For it fol-
 “ low’d in *St. Paul*, which I knew not; Take to you
 “ him that is yet weak in faith. Which saying *Alipius*
 “ applied to himself, and open’d his whole state of
 “ doubtfulness to me. But by this admonition of
 “ *St. Paul*, he was establish’d, and was join’d to me
 “ in my good purpose; but calmly, and without any
 “ troublesome delay, according to his nature and man-
 “ ners, whereby he differ’d always greatly from me in
 “ the better part.

* Her
 name was
Monica,
 a very holy
 woman, as
 he shews.

“ After this we went in together to my * mother. We
 “ tell her the whole matter; she rejoices. We recite
 “ to her the whole order of the thing: she exults and
 “ triumphs,

“ triumphs, and bleſſes thee, O Lord, who art L. 9. c. 9,
 “ more ſtrong and liberal than we can ask or under- 10, 11, 12,
 “ ſtand; for ſhe ſaw now much more granted to her 13.
 “ from thee, touching me, than ſhe was wont to ask
 “ with her doleful and lamentable ſighs. For thou
 “ haſt ſo converted me now to thee, that I neither
 “ ſought for wife, nor any other hope at all of this
 “ world, living and abiding in that * rule of faith in * This was
 “ which thou didſt reveal me to her, ſo many years the religi-
 “ before. And thus thou didſt turn her ſorrow now ous rule of
 “ into more abundant comfort, than ſhe could wiſh; monaſtical
 “ and into much more dear and chaſt joy, than life which
 “ ſhe could require, by my children, her nephews, St. Augu-
 “ if I had taken a wife. O Lord, I am thy ſervant, ſtine after
 “ I am now thy ſervant, and child of thy hand-maid; profefied.
 “ thou haſt broken my chains, and I will therefore Poſſid. in
 “ ſacrifice to thee a ſacrifice of praiſe. Let my heart vita Aug.
 “ and tongue praiſe thee, and my bones ſay to thee:
 “ O Lord who is like thee? Let them ſay it, O
 “ Lord, and do thou answer, I beſeech thee, and ſay
 “ to my ſoul, I am thy ſalvation.” Hitherto are *St. Auguſtine’s* own words.

Now then, dear Chriſtian, in the miraculous example of this famous man’s converſion, there are divers things to be noted, both for our comfort, and alſo for our inſtruction. Firſt is to be obſerved, the great conflict he had with his ghſtly enemy, before he could get out of his poſſeſſion and dominion; which was ſo much the more, no doubt, becauſe he was to be afterwards ſo great a pillar of God’s Church; and we ſee that his fellow *Alipius* found not ſo great reſiſtance becauſe the enemy ſaw there was much leſs in him to diſturb his kingdom, than in *St. Auguſtine*: which ought greatly to animate and comfort them that feel great reſiſtance, and ſtrong temptations againſt their vocation; aſſuring themſelves, that this is a ſign of more grace and favour, if they manfully go through. So was *St. Paul* call’d, as we read, moſt violently,

Annotati-
ons up on
this con-
verſion.

The beſt
men have
greateſt
conflict in
their con-
verſion.
Acts 9.

being struck down to the ground, and made blind by Christ, before his conversion: because he was a chosen vessel, to bear Christ's name to the *Gentiles*.

Secondly, it is to be noted in the same example, that altho' this man had most strong passions before his conversion; and that in the greatest and most incurable diseases, which commonly afflict worldly men: as in ambition, covetousness, and sins of the flesh, as he himself confesses, which maladies, possess'd him so strongly, that he thought it impossible, before his conversion, ever to subdue and conquer them: yet afterwards he experienced the contrary, by the help of God's omnipotent grace. Thirdly, it is also to be consider'd, that he had not only the victory over these his passions afterwards, but also found great sweetens in the way of a virtuous life. For a little after his conversion he writes: "I could not be satisfied, O Lord, in those days, with the marvellous sweetness which thou gavest me. O how much did I weep in thy hymns and canticles, being vehemently stirr'd up with the voices of thy Church, singing most sweetly! those voices did run in my ears, and thy truth did melt in my heart, and thence did boil out an affection of piety, and made tears to run from me, and I was in a most happy state with them?" So he.

Fourthly *is* to be remember'd, for our instruction and imitation, the behaviour of this holy man, concerning his vocation. First, in searching out and trying the same, by his repair to St. *Ambrose*, to *Simplicianus*, and others, by reading of good books, frequenting of good company, and the like; which thou oughtst also, good reader, to do when thou feel'st thy self inwardly moved, and not to lie dead as many are wont, resisting openly the Holy Ghost, with all his good motions, and not so much as once giving an ear to Christ, who knocks at the door of their conscience. Moreover St. *Augustine*, as we see, refused not the means to know his vocation; but pray'd, wept, and often retired him-
self

L. 6. c. 6.
& 15.

L. 9. c. 6.

The deli-
verance of
St. *Augu-
stine*, in
trying and
following
God's vo-
cation.

Apoc. 3.

self alone from company to talk with God of that matter: which many of us will never do, but rather do detest and fly all means that may bring us into those thoughts of our conversion. Finally, *St. Augustine* after he had once seen clearly the will and pleasure of God, made no more stay upon the matter, but broke off resolutely from all the world and vanities thereof, gave over his rhetorick lecture at *Milan*, left all hope of promotion in the court, and betook himself to serve almighty God throughly; and therefore no marvel if he received so great consolation and advancement from God afterwards, as to be so worthy a member in his holy Church. Which example is to be follow'd by all them that desire perfection, so far as each man's condition and state of life permits.

And here, by this occasion, I cannot but advertise thee, good reader, and also by *St. Augustine's* example, forewarn thee, that whosoever means to make this resolution throughly, must use some violence to himself at the beginning. For as a fire, if you rush in upon it with force, is easily put out; but if you deal softly, putting it in one hand after another, you may rather hurt your self than extinguish the same: so is it with our passions, which require fortitude, and courage for a time, especially at the beginning. Which whosoever shall use, together with the other means, that shall be set down, God willing, in the second book of this treatise, he will most certainly find that thing to be easy, which now he thinks heavy; and that sweet, which now he esteems so unfavoury. For proof whereof, as also for conclusion of this chapter, I will allege a short discourse out of *St. Bernard*, who after his way proves the same most aptly by an authority alleged out of the holy Scriptures. His words are these:

Christ says to us: Take my yoke upon you, and you will find rest. " This is a marvellous novelty, " but that it comes from him who makes all things " new. He that takes up a yoke finds rest: he that

Violence to be used at the beginning of our conversion.

Bern.
in illa
verba E-
vangelij:
Ecce nos
reliquimus
omnia ante
finem.
Psaln 93.

Christ's
yoke a
feign'd la-
bour.

Gal. 3. 3.

“ leaves all, finds a hundred times as much. He knew
 “ this well (I mean that man according to the heart
 “ of God) who said in his *Psalms*: Does the seat of ini-
 “ quity cleave to thee, which makes labour in pre-
 “ cepts? is not this a feign'd labour, dear brethren,
 “ in a commandment, I mean a light burden, a sweet
 “ yoke, an anointed Cross? so in old times he says
 “ to *Abraham*; take thy son *Isaac*, whom thou lovest,
 “ and offer him to me in sacrifice. This was a feign'd
 “ labour in a commandment. For *Isaac* being offer'd,
 “ he was not kill'd, but sanctified thereby. Thou
 “ therefore, if thou hear the voice of God within thy
 “ heart, ordering thee to offer up *Isaac*, which signi-
 “ fies joy or laughter, fear not to obey it faithfully and
 “ constantly. Whatsoever thy corrupt affection judges
 “ of the matter, be thou secure. Not *Isaac*, but the
 “ ram shall die for it; thy stubbornness only, whose
 “ horns are intangled with thorns, and cannot be in
 “ thee, without the prickings of anxiety. Thy Lord
 “ does but tempt thee, as he did *Abraham*, to see what
 “ thou wilt do. *Isaac*, that is, thy joy in this life,
 “ shall not die as thou imaginest, but shall live; only
 “ he must be lifted up upon the wood, to the end thy
 “ joy may be on high, and that thou mayst glory, not
 “ in thy own flesh, but only in the Cross of thy Lord,
 “ by whom thy self also art crucified: crucified, I say,
 “ but crucified to the world: for, unto God thou livest
 “ still, and that much more than thou didst before.”
 Hitherto *St. Bernard*, with whose words we shall end
 this chapter.



C H A P. III.

The third impediment which deters men from resolution in God's service: which is the fear they conceive of persecution, affliction, loss, danger, or tribulation.

THERE are many in the world, who either moved by the reasons and considerations before mention'd, or convicted by their own experience, because they behold daily no small numbers of godly persons to live as contentedly as themselves, do yield thus much to a virtuous life, that in very deed they esteem the same to be easy and pleasant enough to such as are once enter'd into it: and that for their own parts they could be content to embrace and follow the same, if they could do it with quiet and peace on all sides. But yet to exhort them to it in such time or place, or with such order and circumstances, of tribulation, affliction, or persecution, that may fall upon them for the same; they think it a matter unreasonable to be demanded, and themselves very excusable, both before God and man, for refusing it. But this excuse, dear brother, is no better than the foregoing, of pretended difficulties; because it stands upon a false ground, as also upon an unjust illation or consequence forced upon that ground. The ground is this, that a man may live virtuously, and serve God truly, with all worldly ease, and without any affliction or persecution, which is false. For altho' external contradictions and persecutions, are more in one time, than in another, more in this place, than in that; yet there cannot be any time or place without some, both external and internal. Which altho', as I have shew'd before, in respect of the manifold helps and consolations sent from God to counterpoise

New shifts
to avoid re-
solution.

Four
points to
be handled
in this
chapter.

poise them, seem not heavy nor unpleasant to the godly; yet they are in themselves both great and weighty, as would appear if they fell upon the wicked and impatient. Secondly, the illation and consequence made upon this ground, is unjust; for it alleges tribulation, as a sufficient reason to abandon God's service, which God himself has ordain'd for a means to the contrary effect: that is, to draw men thereby to his service, and from the service of the world. For the better clearing whereof, the matter being of very great importance, I will handle in this chapter, these four ensuing points. First, whether it be ordinary for all that must be saved, to suffer some kind of persecution, tribulation, or affliction: that is, whether this be appointed an ordinary, or usual means in this life for man's salvation. Secondly, what are the causes why God, loving us as he does, would choose and appoint these sharp means of our salvation. Thirdly, what principal reasons of comfort a man may have in his tribulations and afflictions. Fourthly, what is required at his hands in that state. Which four points being declared, I doubt not, but great light will appear in this whole matter, which seems to flesh and blood to be so full of darkness and impossibilities.

S E C T. I.

*Whether all good men must suffer tribulation,
or no?*

AND touching the first, there needs little proof, because Christ himself has affirm'd to his Disciples, and by them to all his other servants: In the world you shall sustain affliction. And in another place: *In your patience shall you possess your souls*: that is to say, by suffering patiently the adversities that will be laid upon you. Which St. Paul yet utters more plainly when he says: *All they that will live godly in JESUS CHRIST,* shall

John 26.

Luke 11.

2 Tit. 3.

shall suffer persecution. If all, then, none can be expected. And to signify yet further, the necessity of this matter, both *St. Paul* and *Barnabas* also did teach, as *St. Luke* reports, *That by many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God:* using the word *Oportet*, which signifies a certain necessity. And *Christ* himself yet more plainly reveals this secret, when he says to *St. John* the Evangelist: *I, whom I love, do rebuke and chastise:* And *St. Paul* yet more particularly to the *Hebrews*: out of the third book of *Proverbs* says, *For whom our Lord loves he chastises: and he scourges every child that he receives.* And the same Apostle urges this matter so far in that place, that he affirms plainly all those to be bastards, and no children of God, who are not afflicted by him in this life. The same position he holds to *Timothy*: If we suffer with *Christ*, we shall reign with *Christ*, and not otherwise. Wherein also holy *David* agrees, when he says, *Many are the tribulations of the just.* So that this is a common mark or seal set upon them to be discern'd by.

This verity, tho' not so much understood, and less consider'd by worldly men, yet is every where in holy Scriptures, in divers manners utter'd, but all to one end. As namely, by that which our Saviour said, He came not to bring peace, but the sword into the world. Also by that of *St. Paul*, That no man can be crown'd, except he fight lawfully. And how can we fight, if we have no enemy to oppugne us? *Christ* signifies the same in the *Apocalypse*, when he repeats so often, that heaven is only for him that conquers. The very same is signified by the ship whereinto *Christ* enter'd with his Disciples, which was presently tofs'd, as if it would have sunk. This, I say, by all the ancient fathers exposition, was a figure of the troubles and afflictions which all those should suffer who sail in the same ship with *Christ* our Saviour. The same is proved, where it is said in Scripture, *The life of man is a warfare upon earth. His life is replenish'd with many miseries,* even by

Acts 14.

Apoc. 3.

Heb. 12.

2 Tim. 2.

Psaln 33.

I.
Testimony
of Scrip-
tures.

Mat. 10.

2 Tim. 2.

Apoc. 2.

& 3.

Mat. 8.

Job 7.

Job 14.

by the appointment of almighty God after man's fall. The same is shew'd, in that God has appointed every man to pass through the pains of death before he comes to joy. In like manner by the infinite contradictions and tribulations, both within and without, left to man in this life. As for example, within are the rebellions of his concupiscence, and other miseries of his mind, wherewith he must continually make war, if he will save his soul. Without, are the world and the devil, which never cease to assault him, now by fair means, now by foul; now by flattery, now by threats; now alluring by pleasure and promotion, now terrifying by affliction and persecution: against all which, the good Christian must resist manfully, or else he loses the crown of his eternal salvation.

II. The example of Saints in the Old Testament.

The very same thing also may be shew'd by the examples of all the most renown'd Saints from the beginning, who were not only assaulted internally with the rebellion of their own flesh: but also persecuted and afflicted outwardly by divers adversities, thereby to confirm more manifestly this design of almighty God over us. This we see in *Abel*, persecuted and slain by his own brother, as soon as ever he began to serve God sincerely. The same we see in *Abraham*, afflicted diversly after he was once chosen by almighty God. All his children and posterity that succeeded him in God's favour drank of the same cup: as *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Joseph*, *Moses*, and all the Prophets. Of which Prophets Christ himself gives testimony, how their blood was shed most cruelly by the world. The affliction also of *Job* is wonderful, seeing the Scripture affirms it to have come upon him by God's special appointment, he being a most just man. Wonderful also was the affliction of holy *Tobias*, who, among other calamities was struck blind by the falling down of swallows dung into his eyes; of which the Angel *Raphel* told him afterwards: *Because thou was acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee.* Behold the necessity of afflictions to good

good men. I might add to this, the example of *David* and others; but that *St. Paul* gives a general testimony of all the Saints of the Old Testament, saying: That *Heb. 11.* some were rack'd, some reproach'd, some whipp'd, some chain'd, some imprison'd; others were stoned, cut in pieces, tempted, and slain with the sword; some went about in hair-cloth, in skins of goats, in great need, press'd and afflicted; wandring, and hiding themselves in wildernesses, in hills, in caves, and holes under ground; the world not being worthy of them. Of all which he pronounces this comfortable sentence, to be noted by all, *not accepting redemption, that they might find a better resurrection.* That is, God would not deliver them from these afflictions in this life, to the end, their resurrection and reward in the life to come might be more glorious. So much of the Saints of the Old Testament.

But now in the New Testament, founded expressly upon the Cross, the matter is much more plain, and that with great reason. For if Christ could not go into his glory, but by suffering, as holy Scripture affirms, then by the most reasonable rule of Christ, affirming that the servant has not privilege above his master, it must needs in reason follow; that all must drink of Christ's Cup, who are appointed to be partakers of his glory. And for proof hereof, look upon the dearest friends that ever our Saviour had in this life, and see whether they had part thereof or no. Old *Simeon* prophesied of his mother, and told her at the beginning: that the sword of sorrow should pierce her heart: signifying thereby, the extream affliction that she felt afterwards in the death of her son, and other miseries heap'd upon her. Concerning the Apostles, it is evident, that besides all their labours, wants, sufferings, persecutions and calamities, which were infinite, and in man's sight intolerable, if we believe *St. Paul's* relation of the same, besides all this, I say, God would not be satisfied, except their blood also was spent in his service. And

III.
Saints of
the New
Testament.
Luke 24.
Luke 6.

Luke 2.

1 Cor. 4.
2 Cor. 4,
6, 11, 12.
Acts 20.
Rom. 8.
Job 21.

so we see that he suffer'd none of them all to die naturally, or in their beds, but only *St. John* Evangelist, by a special privilege particularly granted to him from Christ; altho' if we consider what *St. John* also suffer'd in so long a life as he lived, being banish'd by *Domitian* to *Pathmos*; and at another time, cast into a tun of hot boiling oil at *Rome*, as *Tertullian* and *St. Hierom* do report, we shall see that his part also was no less than others in this cup of his master. Of which cup Christ himself foretold him and his brother *James*, that both of them should taste. I might here reckon up infinite other examples, but there is no necessity; for it may suffice, that Christ has given this general rule in the New Testament: *He that takes not his Cross and follows me, is not worthy of me.* By which is resolved plainly, that there is no salvation now to be had, but only for them that take, that is, bear willingly, their proper crosses and afflictions, and therewith do follow their captain, walking on with his Cross on his shoulders before them.

Tert. lib. de Prof. adv. hæret. c. 26. Hier. lib. cont. Jov.

Mat. 10.

An objection answered.

But here perhaps some man may say, if it be so, that no man can be saved, without a cross, that is, without affliction and tribulation; how do all those that live in peaceable times and places, where there is no persecution, no trouble, no affliction, or tribulation? to which I answer: first, that if there were any such time or place, the people living therein would be in very great danger, according to the saying of the Prophet, *In the labours of men they are not, and with men they shall not be scourged. Therefore has pride held them, they are cover'd with their iniquity and impiety, their impiety has proceeded as it were of fat.* Besides this, altho' such men should suffer nothing in this life, yet would they not escape all tribulation: for as *St. Augustine* proves at large, if they die in God's favour and free from mortal sin, they are to be saved by suffering the purging fire in the next world; according to the saying of *St. Paul*, that such as build not gold or silver upon the foundation

Psal. 72. In Psal. 73 & l. de vera & falsa pœnitent. c. 18. 1 Cor. 3.

foundation of faith, but wood, straw, or stubble ; shall receive detriment or damage thereof at the day of our Lord, to be reveal'd in fire. But yet by that fire they will be saved ; and so not without suffering tribulation, yea, far greater than any in this life, as before out of many fathers we have alleged.

Secondly, I answer, that there is no time and place so void of tribulation, but that there is always a cross to be found for them that will take it up. For there is ever, either poverty, sickness, slander, enmity, injury, contradiction, or some other like affliction offer'd continually. For those men are never wanting in the world, of whom the Prophet said, *They that repay evil things for good, detracted from me, because I follow'd goodness* At least, there are always those domestical enemies, of whom our Saviour Christ forewarns us : I mean, either kindred or friends, who commonly resist us, if we begin once thoroughly to serve almighty God ; or else our own disorderly affections, which are the most perillous enemies of all others, because they make war within ourselves. Again, the temptations of the world and the devil, are always attacking us, and to resist them, is much more difficult in time of peace and wealth, than in time of external affliction and persecution. For these enemies are stronger in flattery than in force ; which a holy father expresses by this parable : “ The sun and wind, says he, agreed
“ one day to try their respective strength, in taking a
“ cloke from a traveller. And in the forenoon, the
“ wind used all the violence he could, to blow off the
“ the said cloke, but the more he blew, the faster stuck
“ the traveller's cloke, he gathering it more closely
“ about him. In the afternoon the Sun sent forth his
“ charming beams, and by little and little so enter'd into
“ this man, that he forced him to yield, and to put off not
“ only his cloke, but also his coat. Whereby is proved,
“ says this father, that the allurements of pleasure are
“ more strong and harder to be resisted, than the violence
“ of

Psalms 37.

Time of
peace more
dangerous
than of
persecution

“ of persecution.” And this is proved among other
 2 Reg. 21. arguments, by the example of king *David*, who resisted easily many assaults of adversity; but yet fell dangerously in time of prosperity. Whereby appears, that virtuous men have no less war in time of peace, than in time of persecution. For when external persecution ceases, they turn their fight against their inward passions, which oftentimes are more troublesome than external enemies. So that there never wants occasion of bearing the Cross, and suffering affliction, to him that will accept of the same. And this may suffice for the first point, to prove that every man must enter into heaven by tribulation, as St. *Paul* says.

S E C T. II.

The causes why God sends afflictions to the godly.

TOUCHING the second point; why God would have this to be so, it would be sufficient to answer, that it pleased him best so, without seeking any further reason of his meaning herein: even as it pleased his divine majesty, to abase his Son so much, as to send him into this world to suffer and die for us, and so to enter into his glory, whereas his divine power could have wrought our salvation by infinite other means, if it had pleased him, tho’ no way was more excellent or convenient than this. Wherefore if we will needs seek a reason, why he would have all good men to suffer, and be vex’d in this life; this one might be sufficient for all: that seeing we hope for so great a glory as we do, we should labour a little first for the same, and so shew our selves worthy of God’s favour, and of so high an exaltation. But because it has pleased his divine majesty, not only to manifest to us his will and determination for our suffering in this life, but also divers reasons of his most holy purpose and pleasure therein, for our further encouragement, and consolation of those
 that

that do suffer; I will in this place repeat briefly some of the same, to manifest his exceeding great love and fatherly care over us.

The first cause then, and the most principal, is to increase thereby our merit in this life, and consequently our glory in the life to come. For having appointed by his eternal wisdom and justice, that none shall be crown'd there, but according to the measure of their fight here: the more and greater combats he gives, together with sufficient grace to overcome them; the greater crown of glory he prepares for us at our resurrection. St. Paul touches this cause in the words before alleged of the Saints of the Old Testament; to wit, That they received no redemption from their miseries in this world, to the end they might find a better resurrection in the world to come. Christ also meant this when he said, Happy are they who suffer persecution, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: happy are you, when men speak evil of you, and persecute you, &c. Rejoice and be glad, I say, for your reward is great in heaven. Hereunto also appertain all those promises of gaining life by losing life; of receiving a hundred for one, and the like. Hence do proceed all those large promises to virginity and chastity; and to such as abandon all for the kingdom of heaven, to voluntary poverty, and to the renouncing of our own will by obedience. All which are great conflicts against the flesh, world, and our own sensuality, and cannot be perform'd but by sufferings and afflictions. Finally, St. Paul declares this matter fully, when he says: *Our tribulation which presently is momentary, and light works above measure, exceedingly an eternal weight of glory in us.*

The second cause why God appointed this, is to draw us thereby from the love of the world, which he holds for his profess'd enemy, as in the next chapter shall be shew'd at large. This cause St. Paul utters in these words, *Whilst we are judged of our Lord, we are chastised that with this world we be not damn'd.* In like

Increase of merit and glory.

2 Tim. 2.
Apoc. 2.

Heb. 11.

Mat. 5.
Mat. 19.
Isaiah 56.
1 Cor. 7.
Psalm 67.
Mat. 19.
Luke 12.

2 Cor. 4.

Hatred of the world.

1 Cor. 11.

A similitude.

Luke 15. manner as a nurse, who, to wean her child from the love of her milk, anoints her teat with aloes, or some other such bitter thing: so our merciful Father, that would withdraw us from worldly delights, by which infinite men perish daily, uses to send tribulation, which of all other things has most force to work that effect: as we see in the example of the prodigal son, who could by no means be stay'd from his pleasures, and brought home to his father, but only by affliction.

A medicine Thirdly, God uses tribulation as a most present and
to cure our
diseases. sovereign medicine to heal us of many diseases, other-
wise almost incurable. As first, of a certain blindness
and careless negligence in our state, contracted by wealth
and prosperity. In which sense, holy Scripture says:

Isaiah 28. *Vexation alone shall give understanding.* And the

Prov. 29. wise man affirms, *Rod and rebuke gives wisdom.* This

Tob. 11. was shew'd in figure, when the sight of *Tobias* was re-

Gen. 4. stored by the bitter gall of a fish. And it is manifest

2 Mac. 9. in *Nabuchodonosor*, *Saul*, *Antiochus*, and *Manasses*, all

2 Para. 33 which came to see their own faults by tribulation,
which they would never have done in time of prosperity.

The like we read of the brethren of *Joseph* who falling
into some affliction in *Ægypt*, presently enter'd into
their own conscience, and said, *Worthily do we suffer*
these things, because we have sinned against our brother.

And as tribulation brings this light whereby we see
our own defects; so it helps greatly to remove and cure
the same: wherein it may be well compared to the rod

Exod. 17. of *Moses*. For as that rod striking the hard rocks

Deut. 18. brought forth water, as the Scripture says: so this rod

Psalms 77. of affliction falling upon stony-hearted sinners, molli-
fies them to contrition, and oftentimes brings forth

floods of tears of repentance. Wherefore, *Sara* in the

book of *Tobias* says to almighty God: *Blessed is thy*
name O God of our fathers, who in the time of tri-

Job 22. *bulation forgiveest them their sins that invoke thee.* And

Prov. 7. for like effect, it is compared also to a file of iron,

Eccles. 95. which takes away the rust of the soul. In like
manner,

manner, to a purge that drives out corrupt humours. And finally, to a goldsmith's forge, which consumes away the refuse metals, and refines the gold to its perfection. As God says to a sinner, by *Isaiab* the Prophet, *I will boil out thy dross till it be pure, and I will take away all thy sin.* And again, by *Jeremiah*: *I will melt, and will try them.* This he meant of the fire of tribulation, whose property is according as the Scripture says, to purge and refine the Soul, as fire purges and refines gold in the furnace. For besides the purging and removing of greater sins, by consideration and contrition, which tribulation works as has been * shew'd, it purges also the rust of infinite evil passions, appetites, and humours in man: as the humour of pride, of vain-glory, of choler, of delicate niceness, and a thousand more which prosperity engenders in us.

* See before Part I. Chap. I.

This God declares by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, saying *Set it upon hot burning coals empty, that the brass thereof may wax hot and be melted: and let the filth thereof be melted in the midst thereof, and let the rust thereof be consumed.* This is also what *Eliu* one of *Job's* friends means when he says, That God instructs a man by discipline or correction to the end he may turn him from the things that he has done, and deliver him from pride; which is understood of his sinful acts. He adds a little after, the manner of his purgation, saying, His flesh being consumed by punishments, let him return again to the days of his youth. That is, all his fleshly humours and passions being now consumed by punishments and tribulations, let him begin to live again in such purity of soul, as he did at the beginning of his youth, before he had contracted these evil humours and diseases by prosperity.

Neither is tribulation only a strong medicine to heal sin, to purge away the base and refuse metals in us, of brass, tin, iron, lead and dross, as almighty God by *Ezekiel*, says; but also a most excellent preservative

A preservative.

against sin for the time to come, according as holy
Pſalm 17. king *David* ſaid : *Thy diſcipline has corrected me unto the end.* That is to ſay, it has made me careful, and watchful not to commit ſin again, according to what
Eccleſ. 31. the Scripture ſays in another place, *A grievous infirmity makes a ſober ſoul.* For which cauſe the Prophet *Jeremias* calls tribulation, *Virgam vigilantem* ; a watchful rod : that is, as *St. Jerom* expounds it, a rod that makes a man watchful. God ſignified the ſame, when
Hofea 2. he ſaid by *Hofea* the Prophet, *I will hedge in thy way with thorns* ; that is to ſay, I will ſo cloſe thy life on every ſide, with the remembrance and fear of affliction, that thou ſhalt not dare to tread awry, leſt
Pſalm 18. thou treadeſt upon a thorn. All which holy *David* expreſſes of himſelf, in theſe words : Before I was humbled and brought low by affliction, I did ſin, and offend thee, O Lord, but after that time, I have kept thy commandments.

Of this alſo appears yet another cauſe, why God afflicts his elect in this life ; and that is, to prevent his juſtice upon them in the world to come : I mean that juſtice which otherwiſe remains to be executed upon every one after their departure hence, in that moſt grievous purging fire whereof I ſpoke before. Touching which, *St. Bernard* ſays thus : “ Oh would to
Bern. ſer. de 6. “ God ſome man would now beforehand, provide
Tribulat. in fine. “ for my head abundance of water, and to my eyes
 “ a fountain of tears ; and ſo perchance the burning
 “ fire ſhould take no hold, where running tears had
 “ cleaned before.” And the reaſon of this is, as that holy man himſelf notes afterwards, becauſe God has ſaid by *Nabum* the Prophet : *There ſhall not riſe double tribulation, ---- I have afflicted thee, and I will afflict thee no more.* Of which tribulation of this grievous purging fire, read attentively, dear brother, that which has been alleged before at large out of *St. Auguſtine*, and other ancient fathers, in the firſt part of
Nabum 1.

* Part I.
 Chap. IX.

* this book, and thy heart will find whereat to tremble.
 Sixthly,

Sixthly, God sends tribulation upon his servants, to examine and prove them thereby, whether they be faithful and constant or no: that is, to make themselves and other men see and confess, how faithful or unfaithful they are. This in figure was signified, when *Isaac* would touch his son *Jacob*, before he would bless him. And this the Scripture expresseth plainly, when speaking of the tribulations laid upon *Abraham*, it adds, God tempted *Abraham*, by these means to prove him. And *Moses* said to the people of *Israel*, Thou shalt remember how thy God led thee forty years about the desert to afflict thee, and tempt thee; to the end it might appear what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldst keep all his commandments or no. And again, a few chapters after, Your God and Lord does tempt you, to the end it may be manifest whether you love him or no, with all your heart and with all your soul. In which sense also the Scripture says of *Ezekias*, after many praises given him, That God left him for a time to be tempted, that the thoughts of his heart might thereby be made manifest.

And that this is God's way of proceeding with all good men, king *David* shews in the person of all, when he says, Thou hast proved us, O Lord, thou hast examined us by fire; thou hast laid tribulation upon our backs, and brought men upon our heads. And yet how well he liked this cup of tribulation, he signifies when he calls for more thereof in another place, saying, *Prove me, O Lord, and tempt me; burn my reins and my heart.* That is, try me by the way of tribulation and persecution; search out the secrets of my heart and reins; let the world see, whether I will stick to thee in adversity or no. Thus said that holy Prophet, knowing very well that which in another place the Holy Ghost declares: That as the furnace tries the potters vessels, so tribulation tries men. For as the only sound vessels hold when they come to the furnace, and those which are creazed break in pieces; so in

To prove us.

Gen. 27.

Gen. 22.

Deut. 13.

Ibid.

2 Part 32.

Psalms 66.

Psalms 25.

Tribulation tries.

Eccles. 27.

time of tribulation and persecution, only the virtuous stand, and the counterfeit betray themselves, according to the saying of *CHRIST*: They depart from me in time of temptations.

Luke 8.

To make
men run
to God.

Hosea 11.

Psalms 31.
Isaiah 26.
Psalms 15.

Hosea 6.

Psalms 82.
Tribula-
tion helps
not the re-
probate.

Jere. 2.

Jere. 5.

The seventh reason why God lays tribulation upon the virtuous is thereby to make them run to him for aid and help; even as the mother, to make her child love her more and run to her, procures the same to be made afraid and terrified by others. This God expresses plainly by the Prophet *Hosea*, saying of them that he loved, *In the cords of Adam I will draw them in the bands of charity: and I will be to them as lifting up the yoke upon their necks.* By the ropes of *Adam* he means affliction, whereby he drew *Adam* to know himself; as also appears by that which he adds of the heavy yoke of tribulation, which he will lay upon the heads and faces of his servants, as chains of love, thereby to draw them to him. This chain had drawn *David* to him, when he said, *Thou art my refuge from the tribulation.* As also those of whom *Isaiah* says, *Lord in distress they have sought after thee.* Also those of whom *David* said, *Their infirmities were multiplied: after that they made haste.* And God says generally of all good men, *In their tribulation early they will rise up to me.* Wherefore holy king *David*, desiring the good of certain men, and to win them to God, says in one of his *Psalms*, *Fill their faces with ignominy, and they will seek thy name, O Lord.* And this is true, as I said, in the elect and chosen servants of God. But in the reprobate, this rope draws not, this yoke holds not, nor does this chain of love win them to God; whereof God himself complains, saying, *In vain have I struck your children, they have not received my discipline.* And again, the same Prophet says of them to God, *Thou hast struck them and they were not sorry, thou hast broken them and they refused to receive discipline; they have hardened their faces more than the rock, and they would not return.*

From

From this follows an eighth reason, why God brings his servants into affliction; to wit, thereby to shew his power and love in delivering them. For as in this world a princely mind desires nothing more than to have an occasion whereby to shew his ability and goodwill to his dear friend: so God almighty who has all occasions in his own hands, and surpasses all his creatures together in greatness of love and nobility of mind, works purposely divers occasions and opportunities, whereby to shew and exercise the same. So he brought the three children into the burning furnace, thereby to shew his power and love in delivering them. So he brought *Daniel* into the lions den; *Susanna* to the point of death; *Job* into exceeding misery; *Joseph* into prison; *Tobias* to blindness; thereby to shew his power and love in their deliverance. For this cause did *CHRIST* suffer the ship to be almost cast away, before he would awake; and *St. Peter* to be almost under water before he would take him by the hand.

To manifest God's power and love in delivering.

Deut. 36.
Job 1. 2,
15.
Gen. 31.
Tob. 2. 12.
Mat. 8.
Mark 14.

And besides this reason, many other reasons and most comfortable causes of God's dealing in this manner do appear. As first, that we being deliver'd from our afflictions, may thence take more joy and delight, than if we had never suffer'd the same. For as water is more grateful to the traveller, after a long drought; and a calm more pleasant to passengers, after a troublesom tempest: so is our delivery more sweet after persecution or tribulation, according to what Scripture says: The mercy of God is beautiful and pleasant in time of tribulation. This also our Saviour signified, when he said, *Your sorrows shall be turn'd into joy.* That is, you shall rejoice, that ever you were sorrowful. This *David* proved, when he said, *Thy rod and thy staff they have comforted me:* that is, I take great comfort that ever I was chastised with them. And again, *According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart thy consolations have made my soul joyful:* that is, for

The joy of deliverance. A similitude.

Eccles. 35.
John 16.
Psaln 22.
Psaln 93.

every sorrow that I received in time of affliction, I receive now a consolation after my deliverance. And again in another place, *I shall rejoice and be joyful in thy mercy: and wherefore will he rejoice? it follows immediately, Because thou hast respected my humility, thou hast saved my soul out of necessities, neither hast thou shut me up in the hands of the enemy, thou hast set my feet in a large place.*

This then is one most gracious meaning of our loving and merciful Father in afflicting us for a time, to the end our joy may be the greater after our deliverance; as no doubt but it was in all those whom I have named before, who were deliver'd by God's mercy: I mean, *Abraham, Joseph, Daniel, Sadrach, Misach and Abdenago, Susanna, Job, Tobias, Peter,* and the rest, who had more joy after their deliverance, than if they had never been in affliction at all. When *Judith* 6. *Judith* had deliver'd *Bethulia*, and return'd thither with *Holofernes* head, there was more hearty joy in that city, than ever there would have been, if it had not been in distress. When *St. Peter* was deliver'd out of prison by the Angel, there was more joy for his deliverance in the church, than could have been, if he had never been in prison at all.

Out of this great joy results another effect of our tribulation, much pleasing to God, and comfortable to our selves; and that is, a most hearty and earnest thanksgiving to our Lord for our deliverance; such as the Prophet used when he said, after his deliverance:

Psalm 58. But I will sing thy strength, and exalt thy mercy in the morning, because thou art become my receiver and my refuge in the day of my tribulation. Such hearty thanks and praise did the children of *Israel*, when they were pass'd over the red sea, yield to God for their deliverance,

Exodus 15. in that notable song of theirs, which begins; *Let us sing unto our Lord:* and is registred by *Moses* in *Exodus*. *1 Reg. 2.* From a like hearty effect, came also those songs of *Judic. 5.* *Anna, Debora,* and *Judith*, mov'd thereunto by the remembrance

remembrance of their past afflictions. And finally, this is one of the chief things that God esteems and desires at our hands; as he testifies by the Prophet, saying: *Invoke me in the day of tribulation; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* *Psalms 49.*

Besides all these effects, God has yet further reason of laying persecution upon us; as for example, to the end, that by suffering, and perceiving God's certain assistance and consolation therein, we may come to be so hardy, bold, and constant in his service, that nothing afterwards can dismay us. Even as *Moses*, altho' he was first afraid of the serpent that was made of his rod, and so fled away from it; yet afterwards, when he by God's command had once taken it up by the tail, he fear'd it no more. This the Prophet *David* expresses notably, when he says, *Our God is a refuge and strength, a helper in tribulations, which have found us exceedingly. Therefore we will not fear when the earth shall be troubled, and mountains transported into the heart of the sea.* What greater confidence can be imagined than this? *Exodus 4. Psalms 45.*

Again, by persecution and affliction, God brings his children to the exercise and perfect possession of all the holy virtues belonging to a Christian, both *Theological* and *Moral*. And as for *Theological* or divine virtues, which have God himself for their next and immediate object; it is evident, they being but three in number, to wit, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*, that all are exercised in tribulation more than otherwise. As for example: *Faith* is exercised by believing most assuredly the promises God has made of his help for our deliverance. *Hope* is exercised in conceiving, and assuring our selves of the rewards promised to them that suffer patiently. *Charity* is exercised in considering the love of *CHRIST* suffering for us, and thereby provokes the afflicted to suffer again for him. As to *Moral* virtues, tho' they have God also for their end, yet they have some other thing belonging to man's manners for their next and immediate object, but all finally referr'd to God, and are

are exercis'd likewise principally in tribulation: as *Prudence* and *Temperance* in discreet and moderate bearing: *Fortitude*, in shewing stout courage for God: *Obedience*, in conforming our wills to the will of Christ: *Patience*, in not repining: *Humility*, in debasing our selves in the sight of God. And so likewise all other virtues belonging to a good Christian, are stirr'd up, exercis'd, confirm'd, strengthen'd, and establish'd in man by tribulation, according to the saying of St. *Peter*. *But the God of all grace --- will perfect you, having suffer'd a little, and confirm and establish you.*

1 *Peter* 5.

To make
us like un-
to Christ.

Isaiah 53.

Crucified
Christians.

Job 3.

Mat. 5.

Finally, God's meaning by laying persecution and affliction upon us, is to make us perfect Christians; that is to say, like *CHRIST* our Captain, whom the Prophet calls a man of sorrows, and one that has tasted of all manner of infirmities; thereby to receive the more glory at his return to heaven, and to make more glorious all those that will take part therein. To speak in one word, God would make us by tribulation to become crucified Christians, which is the most honourable title that can be given to a creature in heaven or earth. Crucified, I say, and mortified to the vanities of this world, to the flesh, and to our own concupiscence and carnal desires; but quick and full of a lively spirit, in virtue, godliness, and devotion. This is the heavenly meaning of our sovereign Lord and God, in sending us persecution, tribulation, and affliction, in respect whereof, one of *Job's* friends doubts not to say, *Blessed is the man that is corrected of God.* And *CHRIST* himself yet more expressly: *Happy are they who suffer persecution.* If they be happy and blessed, then no doubt, the world which so much abhors all suffering is in the wrong. Then almighty God is but unthankfully dealt withal by many of his children, who repine at this happiness bestow'd upon them, whereas indeed they should accept it with joy and thanksgiving. For proof whereof, I will now enter into the third point of this chapter, which is to examine what reasons,
and

and causes there are, to induce us to this joyfulness and content in tribulation.

S E C T. III.

Divers reasons, why tribulations should be received joyfully by us, when they come.

FIRST of all, for proof of this third point, to wit, that we ought to rejoice in tribulations, the reasons and causes before alleged of almighty God's merciful and fatherly meaning, in sending them to us, should be sufficient to comfort and content any Christian who takes delight in God's holy providence and love towards him. For, if God sends afflictions for the increase of our glory in the life to come, to draw us from the infection of the world, to open our eyes, and cure our diseases, to preserve our souls from sin, to prevent the pains and punishments in the world to come, to prove and try us, to make us run to him, to exhilarate us with our deliverance, to give us occasion of the exercise of all virtues, to make us like *CHRIST* our Captain, as has been shew'd in the former point; who can be justly displeased therewith, but such as are enemies to their own eternal welfare? We see that for the obtaining of bodily health, we are content, not only to admit many bitter and unpleasant medicines, but also, if need require to yield willingly some part of our blood to be taken from us. And how much more willingly, should we do this for the eternal health and salvation of our souls? But now further: if this medicine has so many more commodities besides, as has been declared; if it serves here for the punishment, due otherwise to our sins, in far greater quantity and rigour of justice in the next world; if it makes a trial of our state, and draws us to God; if it procures God's love towards us; yields matter of joy by our deliverance;

The benefits of suffering.

rance; provokes us to thankfulness; emboldens and strengthens us in his service; finally, if it furnishes us with all virtues, and makes us like *CHRIST* himself crucified: then there is singular great cause why we should take comfort and consolation therein. For to come near, and to be like our Master and Saviour, is the greatest dignity and pre-eminence that can be imagined. And lastly, if God's eternal wisdom has so ordain'd and appointed, that this shall be the ordinary means of his servant's salvation; the badge and livery of his Son; the highway to heaven under the standard of his Cross: then we ought not to abhor these means, to refuse this livery, to fly this way; but rather with *St. Peter* and *St. John*, to esteem it a great dignity to be made worthy of the most blessed participation thereof. We see in this world, that to wear the colours of the prince, is thought a prerogative among courtiers; but to wear the robe or crown it self is too great a dignity for any inferior subject to receive: yet *CHRIST* our Lord and King is content to impart both the one and the other to us. And how then ought we to accept thereof, if we are grateful or wise?

Acs 5.
A compa-
rison.

Special
considera-
tions of
comfort in
affliction.
God's pro-
vidence
and his
love.

Mat. 10.

John 18.

These reasons, as I have said, might be sufficient to comfort and rejoice all those that are so happy as to be call'd to suffer affliction and tribulation for Christ's cause. But yet there are some more particular considerations besides. Whereof the first and most principal is, that this cup of persecution and affliction comes not to Christians, by chance or casualty, or by any certain general direction of Stars and Planets, but by the special providence and peculiar disposition of God, as our Saviour *CHRIST* shews at large in *St. Matthew's* Gospel. That is to say, this heavenly medicine or potion is made and prepared for us by the very hand and finger of almighty God himself. Which *CHRIST* signifies expressly, when he said to his Disciples, as it were in anger, shall I not drink the cup which my Father has given to me? That is, since my own Father has temper'd

temper'd a potion for me, shall I not drink it? as if he would say it were too much ingratitude. Secondly, is to be noted, that the very same hand of God, which temper'd the cup for *CHRIST*, who was his own Son, has also done the same for us; according to *CHRIST*'s saying, *You shall drink of my cup*: to wit, *Mat. 10:* of the same cup which my Father has temper'd for me. Hence it follows, that with what hearty love almighty God temper'd this cup for his own most dearly beloved Son, with the same he has temper'd it also for us; that is, altogether for our good and his glory. Thirdly, it is to be consider'd, that this cup is temper'd with such special care, as *CHRIST* says, that what trouble or danger soever it may seem to work, yet shall not one hair of our head perish by the same. Nay further it is to be noted, that which the Prophet said, *Thou wilt Psalm 79:* feed us with the bread of tears, and give us drink with tears in measure; that is, the cup of tears and tribulation shall be so temper'd in measure by our heavenly physician, that no man shall have above his strength. The dose of *Aloes*, and other bitter ingredients, shall be qualified with *Manna*, and sufficient sweetness of heavenly consolation. *God is faithful, says St. Paul, 2 Cor. 10:* who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able. This is a point of singular comfort, and ought always to be in our remembrance.

Besides this, we must consider, that the appointing and tempering of this cup being now in the hands of *CHRIST* our Saviour, by the full commission granted him from his Father, and he having learn'd by his own suffering, as *St. Paul* notes, what it is to suffer in flesh and blood; we may be sure that he will not lay upon us more than we can bear. For, as if a man had a father or brother that was a most skilful physician, and should receive a purge from them; he might be sure it would never hurt him, how disagreeable soever it might appear. So much and more may we be assured of this potion of tribulation minister'd to us by the

All tribulations measured unto us by Christ. *Mat. 28. Heb. 5.*

A comfortable comparison.

Heb. 12. the hand of *CHRIST*, howsoever, as *St. Paul* says, it seems to us unpleasant for the present.

God's measure of tribulation goes according to the measure of his love.

Apoc. 3.

Heb. 12.

But above all other comfortable thoughts, this is the greatest and most full of consolation, to consider that he divides this cup only out of love, as he himself protests, and *St. Paul* proves. That is, he gives out portions of his Cross, the richest jewel that he makes account of, as worldly princes do their treasure, to none but their chosen and select friends; and among them also not equally to each man, but to every one a measure, according to the measure of good-will and special affection, wherewith he loves them. This is evident by the foregoing examples, of his dearest friends most of all afflicted in this life: that is to say, they received greatest portions of his treasure, because his love and good-will was greatest towards them. This also may be seen manifestly in the example of *St. Paul*, of whom, after that Christ had said to *Ananias*: He is a chosen vessel to me; he gives immediately the reason thereof: *For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name.* Lo here, because he was a chosen vessel, therefore he must suffer great matters for Christ. Does not then the measure of his suffering go according to the measure of God's love for us? surely *St. Peter* knew well how the matter went, and therefore he writes thus: If you living well, do suffer with patience, this is a grace, or privilege, before God. And again: *If you be reviled in the name of Christ, you are happy; because that which is of the honour, glory, and virtue of God, and the spirit which is his shall rest upon you.*

1 Peter 2.

1 Peter 4.

The great dignity of suffering.

Mat. 5.

Luke 6.

Can there possibly be any greater reward promised to man, or any more excellent dignity, than to be made partaker of the honour, glory, and power of Jesus Christ? is it a wonder now, if Christ said, That you are happy when men revile and persecute you? is it marvel if he said, Rejoice and triumph in that day? is it wonderful, if *St. Paul* said, That he took great pleasure, and did glory in his infirmities or afflictions, in his

2 Cor. 12.

his reproaches, in his necessities, in his persecutions, in his distresses for Christ? is it marvel, if *St. Peter* and *St. John*, being reproach'd and beaten at the judgment-seat of the *Jews*, went away rejoicing that they were esteem'd worthy to suffer contumely for the name of Jesus? is it marvel, if *St. Paul* accounted this such a high privilege given to the *Philippians*, when he said, *To you it is given for Christ, not only that you believe in him, but also that you suffer for him, having the same combat like as you have seen in me, and now have heard of me?* all this is no marvel, I say, seeing that suffering with Christ, and bearing the Cross with Christ, is as great a preferment in the court of heaven, as it would be in an earthly court for the prince to take off his own garment, and put it on the back of one of his servants.

Acts 5.

Phil. 1.

Now from this follows another consequence, of singular consolation in time of affliction: and it is, that tribulation, especially when grace is also given to bear it patiently, is a great conjecture of our predestination to eternal life: and all the arguments we have used, insinuate this; as on the contrary, to live in continual prosperity, is a dreadful sign of everlasting reprobation. This point is marvelously proved by *St. Paul* to the *Hebrews*, and greatly urged. And Christ signifies this plainly in *St. Luke*, when he says, *Blessed are you that now do weep: because you shall laugh.* And on the other side: *Wo be to you that now do laugh, because you shall mourn and weep.* And yet, the saying of *Abraham* to the rich man in hell, or rather Christ's words parabolically attributed to *Abraham*, confirms this matter more vehemently than all this. For he says to the rich man who complains of his torments, *Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life, and Lazarus likewise evil, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* He does not say, as *St. Bernard* well notes, *Rapuiſti*, thou didst take by violence, but *Recepisti*, thou didst receive. And yet, this is now ob-

Tribulation a sign of predestination.

Heb. 12.

Luke 6.

Luke 16.

jected

objected against him for a cause of his torment and rejection: not because the very enjoying of prosperity or riches is a sufficient cause of damnation in it self; nor was it in this glutton: for it is alleged in the Gospel before, that he would give nothing to *Lazarus*: but it is an evil and fearful sign of reprobation to live still in prosperity; as on the contrary, it is, of predestination to be much exercised in tribulation. Holy *David* handles this matter in divers places. And after long search, and much admiration, his conclusion concerning wicked mens prospering above others in the world,

Psalms 73.

is this: *But yet for guiles thou hast put it to them: thou hast cast them down whilst they were elevated.* As if he should say, the prosperity of sinners seems to be a snare set by you, O Lord, to entangle them; for by thus exalting them you have more effectually wrought their ruin, throwing them down by a sentence of everlasting damnation.

Com. in
Job.
A compa-
rison of
St. Greg.
3 Reg. 6.

This is illustrated by a comparison of *St. Gregory's*. He says, the oxen appointed to the slaughter, are let loose to feed at their pleasure, and the other kept under daily labour of the yoke, and so it fares with evil and good men. To conclude, the stones that must serve for the glorious temple of *Solomon*, were hew'd, beaten, and polish'd without the Church, at the quarry-side, that no stroke of hammer might be heard within the temple. *St. Peter* says, That the virtuous are chosen stones, to be placed in the spiritual building of God in heaven, where there is no beating, no sorrow, no tribulation. Here then in this life we must be polish'd, hew'd, and made fit for that glorious temple: here, I say, in the quarry of this world; here we must be fined, here we must feel the blow of the hammer, and be most glad when we hear or feel the same: because it is a sign of our election to that glorious house of God's eternal mansion.

1 Peter 2.

Apoc. 21.

Tribula-
tion brings
the com-
pany of
God him-
self.

Besides this matter of predestination and election, there is yet another thing of no small comfort to the
godly

godly when afflicted, founded on the words of almighty God: *I am with him in tribulation.* Whereby is promised *Psalm 90.* the company of God himself in affliction and persecution. This is a singular motive, says *St. Bernard*, to stir men up to embrace tribulation, seeing that even in this world, men venture to do many hard and difficult things for the sake of company. *Joseph* was carried *Gen. 37.* captive into *Ægypt*, and God went down with him as the Scripture says; yea, even more than that, it is said, that he went into the dungeon, and was in chains *Sap. 10.* with him. *Sidrac*, *Misach*, and *Abdenago* were cast into a burning furnace, and presently there was a fourth seen that did bear them company; of whom *Nabuchodonosor* says thus, Did we not put three men only bound into the fire? and his servant answer'd, Yea, surely Sir: but behold says he, I see four men unbound walking in the midst of the fire; and the shape of the fourth is like the son of God. Christ restored, as he pass'd by, a certain beggar to his sight who had been blind from his nativity: for which thing the man being soon after call'd in question, and speaking somewhat in the praise of Christ for the benefit received, he was cast out of the synagogue by the Pharisees. Which Christ hearing, sought him out presently, and comforting his heart, bestow'd upon him the light of mind, of much more importance than that of the body given to him before. By this and the like examples it appears, that a man is no sooner in affliction and tribulation for justice-sake, but presently Christ is at hand to bear him company: and if his eyes were open'd as the eyes of *Eliseus* Disciple were, to see his companions, the *2 Reg. 16.* troops of Angels I mean, which attend upon their Lord in this his visitation; no doubt but his heart, would be greatly comforted therewith.

But that which the eye cannot see, the soul feels; that is, she feels the assurance of God's grace in the very depth of all tribulations. This he has promised again and again, this he has sworn, and this he performs

The assistance of
God's
grace in
tribulation

most faithfully to all those that suffer meekly for his name. This *St. Paul* most certainly assured himself of, when he said, That he did glory in all his infirmities and tribulations, to the end that the virtue of Christ might dwell in him: that is to say, that Christ should assist him more abundantly with his grace; for when I am most in infirmity, then am I most strong, says he. That is, the more tribulations and afflictions are laid upon me, the more potent is the aid of Christ's grace unto me. And therefore the same Apostle writes thus of himself, and of all the other Apostles together: *In all things we suffer tribulation: but are not in distress, we want but are not destitute, we suffer persecution but are not forsaken: we are cast down but we perish not.* This then ought to be a most sure and secure staff in the hands of all afflicted Christians, that whatsoever befalls them, death or life, yet the grace of almighty God will never fail to support, and protect them: for that saying of *St. Augustine*, so often repeated by him in his works, that God never forsakes any man, except he be rejected and forsaken by man first, is most true and certain.

*Ser. 8. D.
Temp. &
de nat. &
gr. cap. 16.*

**Short time
of suffering
and great
reward.**

For the last reason of comfort in affliction, I will join two things together of great force and efficacy in this matter. The first whereof is, the expectation of reward; the other is the shortness of time wherein we have to suffer. Both are touched by *St. Paul* in one sentence, when he says, That a little, and momentary tribulation in this world, works an eternal weight of glory in the height of heaven. By momentary he shews the little time we have to suffer; and by eternal weight of glory, he expresses the incomprehensible greatness of the reward prepared in heaven for recompence of that suffering. Christ also joins both these comforts together, when he says, *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.* In his promising to come quickly, he signifies that our tribulation

2 Cor. 4.

Apc. 22.

bulatation will not last long; and by saying that *he brings his reward with him*, he assures us, that he will not come empty handed, but ready furnish'd, to recompence our labour throughly. And what greater means of encouragement, dear brother, could he use than this? if a man did bear a very heavy burden, yet if he was sure to be well paid for his labour, and that he had but a little way to carry it, he would strain himself to go through to his way's end, rather than by sparing so short a labour, to lose so large and so present a reward. This is our Lord's most merciful dealing with us, to comfort us in our afflictions, and to animate us to hold out manfully for a time, tho' for the present the weight seem heavy on our shoulders. The coming of our Lord is even at hand, and the Judge is even before the gates, who will refresh us, and wipe away all our tears, and place us in his kingdom to reap joy without end. And then we shall find the saying of holy St. Paul to be true, *That the passions of this time, are not condign to the glory to come, that shall be reveal'd in us*. That is to say: whatsoever we can suffer in this world is but a small price, to purchase that eternal weight of glory we hope to enjoy in heaven. Which thought alone, ought to be a sufficient comfort to us, amidst whatsoever tribulation and afflictions.

A compa-
rison.James 5:
Mat. 11.
Apoc. 7.
Gal. 6.
Rom. 8.

S E C T. IV.

How we must behave our selves in time of tribulation.

HAVING thus declared the first three points set down before, there remains only to say a word or two of the fourth; which is, what we have to do for our parts in time of persecution and affliction, to reap solid fruit from them. And this might be dispatch'd in one word, saying only that we are to conform our selves to the holy will and pious meaning of almighty

God, of which we spoke before when we shew'd the reasons for which he permits us to be afflicted. But yet for a more easy and better remembrance of the same, I will briefly run over the principal advertisements, which spiritual men give, concerning this matter.

To rejoice. And first of all, it cannot be denied, but that we should endeavour to aspire to that high perfection, whereof our Saviour speaks, and whereunto he exhorts us, when he says, *Be glad and rejoice in your adversities*: but yet, if our corrupt and lumpish nature will not permit us to arrive to this so great perfection; we ought at least to perform that which the Apostle so expressly commands, when he says, *Esteem it, my brethren all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations*; that is, if we cannot rejoice at it indeed, yet we ought to think it a matter in it self worthy of rejoicing; reprehending our selves, because we cannot reach it. And if we cannot mount thus high neither, as indeed we ought to do, yet in all afflictions we ought to remember what another Apostle says, *Patience is necessary for you, that doing the will of God you may receive the promise.*

Heb. 10.

To come
to God by
fervent
prayer.

Mat. 8.

Psalms 43.

Secondly, we ought to do as the Apostles did, when they were in the most terrible tempest at sea, Christ being with them, but yet asleep. That is, we must go and awake him; we must cry out to him with the Prophet: *Why sleepest thou O Lord, arise, and expel us not to the end?* this awakening of Christ, pleases him wonderfully, as has been shew'd before; but especially if it be done with that assured confidence of true affectionate children, wherewith St. Mark describes the Apostles to have awaken'd Christ. For the words are these: *Master, does it not appertain to thee, that we perish?* as if he would say, are not we thy Disciples and Servants? art not thou our Lord and Master? is not the cause thine? is not all our trust and hope in thee? how chances it then that thou sleep'st and suffer'st us to be thus toss'd and tumbled, as if we belonged not to thee? With this zeal and affection pray'd holy

Mark 4.

Isaiah,

Isaiah, when he said, Attend, O Lord, from heaven ; *Isaiah* 63. look hither from the holy habitation of thy glory : where is thy zeal ? where is thy fortitude ? where is the multitude of thy merciful bowels ? have they shut themselves up now towards us ? thou art our Father ; *Abraham* has not known us, and *Israel* has been ignorant of us ; thou art our Father, O Lord, turn thy self about for thy servant's sake, for the love of the tribe of thy inheritance. Thus, I say, we must call upon God ; thus we must awake him, when he seems to sleep in our miseries ; with earnest, with devout, with continual prayer, always having in our mind that most comfortable parable of Christ, wherein he says, *Luke* 11. That if we should come to our neighbour's door, and knock at midnight to borrow some bread, when he and his children are in bed, and most loth to rise ; yet if we persevere in asking and still beating at the door, tho' he were not our friend, he would rise at length and give us our demand ; thereby at least to be rid of our importunity. And how much more will God do this, says Christ, who both loves us, and protects us most mercifully !

But yet here is one thing to be noted in this matter ; and that is, that Christ suffer'd the ship almost to be cover'd with waves, as the Evangelist says, before he would awake ; thereby to signify that the measure of temptations is to be left only to himself. It is sufficient for us to rest upon the Apostle's words : *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able.* We must not examine, or mistrust his doings ; we must not inquire why he does this ; or why he suffers that ; or how long he will permit these evils to reign : God is a great God in all his doings ; and when he sends tribulation, he sends a great deal together, to the end he may shew his great power in delivering us, and recompence it with great measure of comfort. His temptations oftentimes go very deep, thereby to try the very hearts and reins of men. He went far with *Elias*,

An important note.

Mat. 8.

Heb. 10.

God permits temptations to grow great before he remedies them.

when he caus'd him to fly into a mountain, and there
 3 *Reg.* 19. desirous of death, to say, They have kill'd all thy
 Prophets, O Lord, and I am left alone, and now they
 seek to kill me also. He went far with *David*, when
Psalms 30. he made him cry out, *I have said in the excess of my*
mind, I am cast away from the sight of thy eyes. God went
 2 *Cor.* 1. far with the Apostles, when he forced one of them to
 write, *We will not have you ignorant, brethren, con-*
cerning our tribulation which happen'd in Asia, that we
were press'd above measure, above our power, so that it
was tedious unto us even to live. But yet above all
 others, he went furthest with his own dear Son, when
 he constrain'd him to utter those piteous and most
 lamentable words upon the Cross: *My God, my God,*
why hast thou forsaken me? Who can now complain
 of any proof or temptation whatsoever laid upon him,
 seeing God would go so far with his own dear and
 only Son?

Magnani-
 mity with
 a strong
 faith.

Hence then ensues the third thing necessary for us in
 tribulation: which is magnanimity ground'd upon a
 strong and invincible faith of God's assistance, and of
 our final deliverance, how long soever he delays the
 matter, and how terrible soever the storm seems for
 the time. This God requires at our hands as may be
 seen by the examples of his disciples, who cried not,
We perish, before the waves had cover'd the ship, as
Mat. 8. *St. Matthew* writes: And yet Christ said to them,
Luke 8. Where is your faith? *St. Peter* also was not afraid till
 he was almost under water, as the same Evangelist re-
 cords; and yet Christ reprehended him, saying, *O*
Mat. 14. *thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* What then
 must we do in this case, dear brother? Surely, we
 must put on that magnanimous faith of valiant king
David, who upon the most assured trust he had of
Psalms 17. God's assistance, said. In the help of my God I will
 go over a wall. Of which invincible faith, *St. Paul*
Phil. 4. was also, when he said, I can do all things in him
 that comforts, and strengthens me. Nothing is im-
 possible,

possible, nothing is too hard for me, with his assistance. We must be, as the Scripture says, like a bold and confident lion, which is without terror; that is, we must not be astonish'd at any tempest, or any adversity; we must say with the Prophet *David*, who was experienced in these matters: *I will not fear thousands of people compassing me.* If I should walk amidst the shadows of death, I will not fear. If whole armies should stand against me, yet my heart should not tremble. My hope is in God, and therefore I will not fear what man can do to me. God is my aid, and I will not fear what flesh can do to me. God is my helper and my protector, and therefore I will despise and condemn my enemies. And another Prophet in like sense, *Behold, God is my Saviour, I will do confidently, and will not fear.* These were the speeches of holy Prophets, of holy Saints, of men that knew well what they said, and had often tasted of affliction themselves; and therefore could say by their own experience, how infallible God's assistance is therein.

Prov. 28.

Psal. 3.

Psal. 21.

Psal. 26.

Psal. 55.

Psal. 117.

Isaiah 12.

To this supreme courage, magnanimity, and Christian fortitude, the Scripture exhorts us, when it says, *If the spirit of him that has power ascend upon thee, leave not thy place.* And again, another Scripture says, *Unto death strive for justice, and God will overthrow thy enemies for thee.* And Christ himself yet more effectually recommends this matter, in these words: *I say to you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after this have no more to do.* And St. Peter adds further, *If you suffer for justice, blessed are you.* And the fear of them fear ye not, and be not troubled. That is, do not only not fear them, but do not so much as be troubled for all that flesh and blood can do against you, when you stand in a good cause.

Christian fortitude.

Eccles. 10.

Eccles. 4.

Luke 12.

1 Peter 3.

Christ goes further in the *Apocalypse* and uses marvellous speeches to entice us to this fortitude. For thus he speaks: He that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit says unto the Churches. To him that

Christ's exhortation to magnanimity.

shall conquer, I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of my God. This says the first and the last, he that was dead, and now is alive: I know thy tribulation, thy poverty; but thou art rich indeed, and art blasphemed by those that say they are true *Israelites*, and are not; but are rather the synagogue of *Sathan*. Fear nothing of that which thou art to suffer; behold the devil will cause some of you to be thrust into prison, to the end you may be tempted, and you shall have tribulation for ten * days. But be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches. He that shall overcome, shall not be hurt by the second death. And he that shall overcome, and shall keep my works to the end, I will give him authority over nations, even as I have received it from my Father; and I will give him, besides the morning Star. He that shall overcome, shall be apparelled in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before my Father, and before his Angels. Behold, I come quickly; hold fast what thou hast, lest another man receive thy crown. He that shall conquer, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall never go forth any more; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new *Jerusalem*. He that shall conquer, I will give him, to sit with me in my throne, even as I have conquer'd, and do sit with my Father in his throne.

Hitherto are the words of Christ to St. *John*. And in the end of the same book, after he had described the joys and glory of heaven at large, he concludes thus: *And he that sate on the throne, said --- Write, because these words are most faithful and true --- He that shall conquer shall possess these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But to the fearful and incredulous, &c. Their part shall be in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

Here

Apoc. 2.

*Those ten days some think to have been the ten general persecutions within the first 300 years after Christ.
Chap 3.

Apoc. 21.

A terrible threat to them that fear persecution.

Here now we see both allurements and threats ; both good and evil, life and death ; the joys of heaven, and the burning lake of hell propos'd unto us. We may stretch out our hands to which we will. If we fight and conquer, as by God's grace we may, then we are to enjoy the promises laid down before. If we shew our selves either unbelieving in these promises, or fearful to take the fight in hand, being offer'd unto us ; then we fall into the danger of the contrary threats: even as St. *John* affirms in another place, that certain *John 12.* noblemen did, among the *Jews*, who believed in Christ, but yet durst not confess him for fear of persecution.

Hence follows, that another virtue also is most necessary in all tribulation and affliction ; and that is, a strong and firm resolution to stand, and go through what opposition or contradiction soever we find in the world, either from fawning flattery, or from persecuting cruelty. This the Scripture teaches, crying out unto us. Be firm and immoveable in the way of our Lord. And again: *Stand in the faith, do manfully and be strong therein.* And yet further, *Trust in God, and remain firm in thy place.* And finally, *You therefore take courage, and let not your hands be dissolved, for there shall be reward to your work.* *Eccles. 9.* *1 Cor. 16.* *Eccles. 11.*

A firm resolution.

The three children *Sidrach*, *Misach*, and *Abdenago*, *2 Par. 15.* had this resolution, when having heard the flattering speech and threats of cruel *Nabuchodonosor*, they answer'd with a quiet spirit: O king, we may not answer you to this long speech of yours. For behold, our God is able, if he will, to deliver us from all this furnace of fire which you threaten, and from all that you can do otherwise against us. But yet if it should not please him so to do, you must know that we do not worship your gods, nor your golden idol which you have set up. *The constancy and firm resolution of Saints. Dan. 3.*

St. *Peter* and St. *John*, had this resolution, when being so often brought before the council, and both commanded

*Acts 4.**Acts 21.**Rom. 8.**St. Paul's
resolution.*

commanded, threatned, and beat, to the end they should talk no more of Christ, they answer'd still, *God must be obey'd rather than men.* St. Paul also had the same when being requested with tears of the Christians in *Cæsarea*, that he would forbear to go to *Jerusalem*, because the Holy Ghost had reveal'd the troubles which expected him there; he answer'd, What mean you to weep thus and to afflict my heart? I am not only ready to be in bonds for Christ's name in *Jerusalem*; but also to suffer death for the same. And in the epistle to the *Romans*, he yet further expresses this resolution of his, when he says: What then shall we say to these things? If God be with us, who will be against us? who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation? shall distress? shall hunger? shall nakedness? shall peril? shall persecution? shall the sword? I am certain, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor strength, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature else shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in *JESUS CHRIST* our Lord.

*Of martyrs
and Con-
fessors.*

Finally, this was the resolution of all the holy Martyrs and Confessors, and other servants of God; whereby they have withstood the temptations of the devil, the allurements of flesh and blood, and all the persecutions of tyrants, exacting things unlawful at their hands. I will allege one example more out of holy Scripture, and that before the coming of Christ, but yet nigh the same; and therefore no marvel, as the holy fathers do note, that it had some heat of Christian fervour and constancy towards martyrdom. The example is wonderful, because in man's sight it was but for a small matter required at their hands by the tyrant's command; that is, only to eat a piece of swines flesh. For thus it is recorded in the Scripture.

It happen'd that seven brethren were apprehended together in those days, and brought with their mother,

to

to the tyranical king *Antiochus*, and there compell'd 1 Mac. 7. with torments of whips and other instruments, to eat of swines flesh against the law. At what time one of them, A marvelous constancy of the seven Machabees and their mother. who was the eldest said, What dost thou seek? or what wilt thou learn of us, O king? we are ready here rather to die than to break the ancient laws of our God. Whereat, the king greatly offended, commanded the frying-pans and pots of bras to be made burning-hot, which being ready, he caused this first man's tongue to be cut off, together with the ends of his fingers and toes, also with the skin of his head, the mother and his other brethren looking on; and after this he caused him to be fried till he was dead. Which being done, the second brother was brought to torment, and after his hair was pluckt off from his head together with the skin, they asked him whether he would yet eat swines flesh, or no, before he was put to the rest of his torments? whereunto he answer'd, no: and thereupon was after many torments, slain with the other. Who being dead, the third was taken in hand, and being order'd to put forth his tongue, he held it forth quickly, together with both his hands, to be cut off, saying confidently, I received both tongue and hands from heaven, and now I despise them both for A worthy saying. the law of God, because I hope to receive them all of him again.

And after they had thus tormented and put to death six of the brothers, every one most constantly professing his faith, and the joy he had to die for God's cause; there remain'd only the youngest, whom *Antiochus* (being ashamed that he could pervert none of the former) endeavour'd by all means possible to draw from his purpose, by promising and swearing that he should be a rich and happy man, and one of his chief friends, if he would yield. But when the youth was nothing moved therewith, *Antiochus* call'd the mother to him, and exhorted her to save her son's life, by persuading him to yield; which she feigning to do, thereby to have A noble example of a mother. liberty

liberty to speak to her son, she made a most vehement exhortation to him in the *Hebrew* tongue, to stand to his faith and to die rather than defile his conscience; which speech being ended, the youth cried out with a loud voice, and spoke this noble sentence worthy to be remember'd: *Quem sustinetis? non obtempero præcepto Regis, sed præcepto Legis*: whom do you stay for? I do not obey the command of the king, but the commandment of the law of God. Whereupon both he and his mother were presently, after many sundry torments, put to death.

This then is the constant and immoveable resolution which a Christian should have in all adversities of this life. Whereof St. *Ambrose* says thus: "Our mind is to
L. 1. Off. c. 38. " be prepared with grace, to be exercised, and to be so
 " establish'd in constancy, that it may not be troubled
 " with any terrors, broken with any adversities, or
 " yield to any punishments or torments whatsoever."

How a
 man may
 come to an
 invincible
 resolution.

If you ask me here how a man can come to this steadfast resolution; I answer, that St. *Ambrose* in the same place shews two ways how to obtain the same. The one is, to remember the endless and intolerable pains of hell, if we yield against our conscience for fear. The other is, to think of the unspeakable glory of heaven, if we persevere constant. Whereto I will add the third, which with a noble heart, may perhaps prevail as much as either of them both; and that is, to consider what others have suffer'd before us, especially Christ himself, and that only out of meer love and affection for us. We see that in this world, loving subjects glory in nothing more than in their dangers or hurts suffer'd in battle for their prince, tho' he never received a blow for them again. What then would they do, if their prince had been afflicted voluntarily for them, as Christ has been for us? but if this great example of Christ seems to thee over-hard or too high to imitate, look upon some of thy brethren before thee, made of flesh and blood as thou art; see
 what

what they have suffer'd before they could enter into heaven ; and think not thy self hardly dealt withal, if thou art also call'd to suffer a little.

St. *Paul* writes of all the Apostles together. Even to this hour, says he, we suffer hunger and thirst, and lack of apparel : we are beaten with mens fists : we are made vagabonds, not having where to stay : we labour and work with our hands : we are cursed, and we do bless : we are persecuted, and we take it patiently : we are blasphemed, and we pray for them that blaspheme us : we are made, as it were, the very outcast and purging of this world, even to this day. That is, tho' we be Apostles, tho' we have wrought so many miracles, and converted so many millions of people ; yet even to this day are we thus used. And in the second epistle describing yet further their lives, he says, We shew our selves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in seditions, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in longanimity, in sweetness of behaviour. And of himself in particular he says, I am the minister of God in my labours, in imprisonments more than the rest, in beatings above measure, and oftentimes in death it self. Five times have I been beaten by the *Jews*, and at every time I had forty lashes lacking one ; three times have I been whipt with rods ; once I was stoned ; three times have I suffered shipwreck ; a day and a night was I in the bottom of the sea ; oftentimes in journeys, in dangers of floods, in dangers of thieves, in dangers of *Jews*, in dangers of *Gentiles*, in dangers of city, in dangers of wilderness ; in dangers of sea, in dangers of false brethren, in labour and travel, in much watching, in hunger and thirst, in much fasting, in cold and nakedness : and besides all these external things, the matters that daily do depend upon me, for my solicitous care over all Churches.

1 Cor. 4.
The sufferings of the Apostles.

2 Cor. 6.

2 Cor. 11.
The particular sufferings of St. *Paul*.

By

How
Christ suf-
fer'd the
Apostles
to want.

Mat .17.

1 Peter 2.

Heb. 12.
A notable
exhortation
of St. Paul.

By this we may see now, whether Christ's holy Apostles, taught us more by words, than they shew'd by their own example, about the necessity of suffering in this life. Christ might have provided for them if he would, at least, things necessary for their bodies, and not have permitted them to have come into these great extremities of wanting cloaths to their back, meat to their mouths, and houses to put their heads in. He that gave them that authority to do so many other miracles, might have suffer'd them also to have procured sufficient maintenance for their bodies, which would be the first miracle that worldly men would work, if they had leave and authority. Christ might have said to St. *Peter*, when he sent him to take his tribute from out of the fish's mouth, take so much more as will suffice for your necessary expences, when you travel over foreign countries; or at least, so much as would serve for the maintenance of his dear Mother the Blessed Virgin committed to the keeping of St. *John*, as poor as her self. But nothing of this would he do, nor yet diminish the great afflictions which I have shew'd before, tho' he loved them as dearly as he loved his own soul. All which was done, as St. *Peter* interprets, to give us example what to follow, what to look for, what to desire, what to comfort our selves in, amidst the greatest of all our tribulations.

St. *Paul* uses this as a principal consideration, when he writes thus to the *Hebrews*, upon the recital of the sufferings of other Saints before them. Wherefore we also brethren, says he, having so great a multitude of witnesses that have suffer'd before us, let us cast off all burden of sin, hanging upon us; and let us run by patience to the battle offer'd us, fixing our eyes upon the author of our faith, and fulfiller of the same, *JESUS*; who placing the joys of heaven before his eyes, sustain'd patiently the Cross, contemning the shame and confusion thereof, and therefore now sits at the right hand of the seat of God. Think upon him,

I say, who sustain'd such a contradiction against himself, from sinners; and be not weary, nor faint for want of courage. For you have not yet, resisted against sin unto blood; and you have forgot, perhaps, that comfortable saying, which the wise man addresseth to you, *My son neglect not the discipline of our Lord: Prov. 3. neither be thou wearied whilst thou art rebuked of him. For whom our Lord loves he chastises: and he scourges every child that he receives.* Persevere therefore in the correction laid upon you. God offers himself to you as to his children. For what child is there whom the Father corrects not? if you be out of correction, whereof all his children are made partakers; then are you bastards, and not children. All correction, for the present time when it is suffer'd, seems unpleasant and sorrowful; but yet afterwards it brings forth most quiet fruit of justice to them that are exercised by it. Wherefore strengthen your weary hands, and loosed knees, and make way to your feet, &c. That is, take courage, and go forward valiantly under the cross laid upon you. This was the exhortation of this holy captain to his countrymen, the *Jews*, soldiers of Jesus Christ.

St. *James*, the brother of our Lord, uses another exhortation in his Catholick Epistle to all Catholicks, not much different from this. Be you therefore patient, my brethren, says he, till the coming of our Lord. Behold, the husbandman expects for a time the fruit of the earth, so precious to him, bearing patiently till he may receive the same in its season: be you therefore patient, and comfort your hearts, for the coming of our Lord will shortly draw near. Be not sad, and complain not of one another. Behold, the judge is even at the gate. Take the Prophets for an example of labour and patience, who spoke unto us in the name of God: *Behold, we account them blessed who have suffer'd.* You have heard of the sufferance of *Job*, and you have seen, I say, that our Lord is merciful and full of compassion. So he.

James 5.
The
exhorta-
tion of
St. *James*.

The con-
clusion.

I might here allege many things more out of holy Scriptures, to this purpose, for they are most copious in this matter. And indeed, if all that is contain'd therein, especially in the New Testament, should be put together and laid before us, it would in effect, yield us almost nothing else, but touching the Cross, and patiently bearing of tribulation in this life. But I must end, for this chapter grows too long, as the other did before. And therefore I will only for my conclusion, set down the confession and most excellent exhortation of old *Mathathias*, in the time of the cruel persecution of *Antiochus* against the *Jews*. The story is thus reported in the Scripture.

The con-
fession and
exhorta-
tion of *Ma-
thathias*.

1 *Mach.* 2.

At that time the officers of *Antiochus*, said to *Mathathias*, thou art a prince, and of greatest state in this city, adorn'd with children and brethren; come thou therefore first, and do the king's commandment as other men have done in *Juda* and *Jerusalem*, and thou and thy children shall be the king's friends, and enrich'd with gold and silver, and many gifts from him. Whereto *Mathathias* answer'd with a loud voice, If all nations should obey *Antiochus*, to depart from the obedience due to the laws of their ancestors; yet I and my children and brethren will follow the laws of our fathers: let God be merciful to us at his pleasure, &c. And the days came of *Mathathias* death, and then he said to his children, now is the time that pride is in her strength. Now is the time of chastisement towards us: the time of eversion and indignation is come. Now therefore, O children, be you zealous in the law of God: yield up your lives for the testament of your fathers: remember the works of your ancestors, what they have done in their generations, and so you will receive great glory and an eternal name. Was not *Abraham* found faithful in time of temptation, and it was reputed unto him for justice? *Joseph* in the time of his distress kept God's commandments, and was made lord over all *Ægypt*. *Phinees* our father, for his
zeal

Note.

Gen. 12.

Gen. 41.

zeal towards the law of God, received the testament of *Num. 25.*
 an everlasting Priesthood. *Joshua*, because he fulfill'd *J. bua 11.*
 God's word, was made a captain over *Israel*. *Caleb*, *Judges 14.*
 because he testified in the Church, received an inheri- *2 Reg. 2.*
 tance. *David*, for his mercy, obtain'd the seat of an eter- *4 Reg. 1.*
 nal kingdom. *Elias*, because he was in zeal of the
 law, was taken up to heaven. *Ananias*, *Azarias*,
 and *Misael*, through their belief, were deliver'd from *Dan. 3.*
 the flame of the fire. *Daniel*, for his simplicity, was *Dan. 9.*
 deliver'd thus from the mouth of lions. And thus run
 over in thought, all generations, and you shall see that
 all that hope in God, shall not be vanquish'd. And fear *A worthy*
 not the words of a sinful man; for his glory is dung and *laying.*
 worms: to-day he is extoll'd, and to-morrow he shall not
 be found, because he is turn'd into his earth, and his cogi-
 tation is perish'd. You therefore, my sons, take courage, and
 do you manfully in the law, because in it you shall be glori-
 ous. Hitherto are the words of Scripture, which shall suf-
 fice for the end of this chapter; and the rather, be-
 cause in another chapter * I will lay down for our in- ** Infr. c. 5*
 struction and encouragement, many more examples of
 true resolution, in divers of God's servants.

C H A P. IV.

*The fourth and greatest impediment that binders
 resolution; to wit, the love and respect, which
 men have for their pleasures, commodities and
 vanities of this world.*

AS the former impediments which now, by
 God's grace, we have removed, are indeed
 great obstacles to many men, in regard to the
 resolution we talk of; so this that we now take in
 hand, is not only of it self a strong impediment, but
 also a general cause, and, as it were, a common ground
 L l to

The world
the ground
of all other
impedi-
ments.

John 12.

2 Titus 4.

Mat. 13.

Mark 4.

Luke 8.

The expo-
sition of
the parable
of the seed,
and of four
sorts of
people sig-
nified
therein.

to all other impediments that are or may be. For if a man could touch the hidden pulse of all such as refuse, or neglect, or defer to make this resolution; he would find the true cause and origin thereof, to be the love and respect which they have for this world, whatsoever excuses they pretend besides. The noble-men of *Jury* pretended fear to be the cause, why they could not resolve to confess Christ openly; but St. *John* that felt their pulses, and knew their disease, declares the true cause to have been, *Because they loved the glory of men, more than the glory of God.* Demas that forsook St. *Paul* in his bands, even a little before his death, pretended another cause of his departure to *Thessalonica*, but St. *Paul* says it was, *Because he loved this world.* So that this world is a general and universal impediment, and more largely dispersed in mens hearts, than outwardly appears; because it brings forth divers other excuses, thereby to cover it self in the people, where it abides,

This may be confirm'd by that most excellent parable of our Saviour Christ, recorded by three Evangelists, concerning the three sorts of men which are to be damn'd, and the three causes of their damnation; whereof the third and last, and most general, including as it were both the two former, is the love of this world. For the first sort of men there mention'd, are compared to a highway, wherein all seed of life that is sown, either withers presently, or else is eaten up by the birds of the air, which is, as Christ expounds it, by the devils, in such careless men as contemn whatsoever is said to them; such are infidels, hereticks, and other such like obstinate and contentious people. The second sort of reprobate people are compared to the rocky grounds, in which, for want of deep root; the seed that falls continues not: and by this are signified light and inconstant persons, that now are fervent, and immediately grow cold again; and so in time of temptation, they are gone, says Christ. The third sort are compared

compared to a field, wherein the seed of life grows up, but yet there are so many thorns about the same (which Christ our Saviour expounds to be the cares, troubles, miseries, and deceitful vanities of this life) that the good corn is choked up, and so brings forth no fruit at all. By which last words he signifies, that wheresoever his doctrine is taught and grows up, and yet brings not forth due fruit; that is to say, wheresoever his faith is planted, received and profess'd, as it is among Christians, and brings not forth a virtuous life, holy conversation, good works, and due service of God, correspondent to this seed: there the principal cause is, because it is choked with the love and care of this present world.

This is a parable of marvellous great importance, as may appear; both because Christ, after the recital thereof, cried out with a loud voice, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*: as also, because he expounded it himself in secret only to his Disciples: and principally, because before the exposition thereof, he used such a solemn preface, saying, *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given; for they seeing, do not see; and hearing, do not hear, nor understand*: whereby our Saviour signifies, that the understanding of this parable above others, is of singular importance, for the conceiving of the true mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; and that many are blind who seem to see, and many are deaf and ignorant, who seem to hear and know; for they understand not well the mysteries of this parable. For which cause also his divine wisdom makes this conclusion, before he begins to expound the parable: *Blessed are your eyes because they do see, and your ears because they do hear*. After which words, he begins his exposition with this admonition: *Hear you therefore, and understand this parable of the sower*.

The importance of this parable and circumstances thereof. *Mat. 13.*

Six principal points of this chapter.

And seeing that this parable does contain as much as may be, or is needful to be said, for the removing

of this great and dangerous impediment of worldly love against the service of God : I design to insist only upon the explication thereof in this place ; and will declare the force and truth of certain words utter'd here by Christ concerning the world and worldly vanities, and how warily they are to be used by us. And for some order and method, I will draw all to these six principal points or heads that do ensue. First, how, and in what sense, all this whole world and commodities thereof are meer vanities in themselves, and of no value, as Christ here signifies ; and consequently ought not to be an impediment to divert us from so great a matter, as the kingdom of heaven, and serving of God. Secondly, how they are not only vanities and trifles ; but also deceptions, as the words of Christ are ; that is to say, deceits and fallacies, not furnishing us really with those little satisfactions which they promise, and we so highly esteem. Thirdly, how they are thorns, as our Saviour affirms ; altho' they seem to worldly men to be most sweet and pleasant for a time, and to be flowers rather than thorns. Fourthly, how they are miseries and afflictions, according to our Saviour's meaning and speech. Fifthly, how they do strangle or choke their possessors, in the sense which our Saviour the Son of God says in this parable. Sixthly, how we may use them notwithstanding, without these dangers and evils, to our great comfort, gain, and preferment, if we will, and do take the right way therein.

S E C T. I.

How all the World is vanity.

AND now for the first : altho' I might stand upon many reasons and demonstrations ; yet I do not see how it can be better declared, briefly and pithily, that all pleasures and goodly shews of this world are meer vanities, as Christ here signifies ; than by alleging the testimony and proof of some, who have tasted
and

and proved them all; that is to say, of such a one, as speaks not only by speculation, but also by his own experience and practice. And this is the wise and mighty king *Solomon*, of whom the Scripture reports wonderful matters, touching his peace, prosperity, riches, and glory in this world. As for example, That all the kings of the earth desired to see his face, for his wisdom and renown'd felicity: that all the princes living, besides, were not like him in wealth: that he had six hundred sixty and six talents of gold, which is an infinite sum, brought him yearly, besides all others that he had from the kings of *Arabia*, and other princes: that silver was as plentiful with him as heaps of stones, and not esteem'd, for the great store and abundance he had thereof: that his plate and jewels had no end: that his seat of majesty, with stools, lions to bear it up, and other furniture, were of gold, surpassing all other kingly seats in the world: that his precious apparel and armour was infinite: that he had all the kings from the river of the *Philistines*, to *Ægypt*, as his servants: that he had forty thousand horses in his stables to ride, and twelve thousand chariots with horses and other furniture ready for them for his use. That he had two hundred spears of gold borne before him, and six hundred crowns of gold bestow'd upon every spear; as also three hundred bucklers, and three hundred crowns of gold bestow'd in the gilding of every buckler: that he spent every day in his house, a thousand * nine hundred and thirty seven quarters of meal and flour; thirty oxen, with a hundred wethers, besides all other flesh: that he had seven hundred wives, as queens, and three hundred others, as concubines. All this, and much more does holy Scripture report of *Solomon's* worldly wealth, wisdom, riches, prosperity; which he having tasted, and used to his fill, yet pronounced at last this sentence of it all: *Vanitas, vanitatum, & omnia vanitas*: vanity of vanities, and all is vanity. By vanity of vanities, meaning, as *St. Hierom*

2 Par. 9.
The
worldly
prosperity
of king *Solomon*.

* 30. *Cori*
simile, &
60. *cori*
farine.
and every
corus is 21
quarters
and odd.
3 Reg. 4.
3 Reg. 11.
Ecclef. 1.
In cap. 1.
Ecclef.

interprets, the greatness of this vanity, above all other vanities that can be devised.

Solomon's
saying of
himself.
Eccles. 1.

Cap. 2.
Ibid.

Neither does *Solomon* only affirm this thing in word, but proves it also by examples of himself: I have been king of *Israel* in *Jerusalem*, says he, and I purposed with my self, to seek out by wisdom all things; and I have seen that all under the sun are meer vanities and affliction of spirit. I said in my heart, I will go and abound in delights, and in every pleasure that can be had; and I saw that this was also vanity. I took great works in hand, built houses to my self, planted vineyards, made gardens, and beset them with all kind of trees; I made my fish-ponds to water my trees. I possess'd servants and handmaids, and had a great family, great herds of cattle, above any that ever was before me in *Jerusalem*. I gather'd together gold and silver, the riches of kings and provinces. I appointed to my self musicians and singers, both men and women, which are the delights of the children of men, fine cups also to drink wine, and whatsoever my eyes did desire, I denied it not unto them; neither did I hinder my heart from using any pleasure, to delight it self in these things which I had prepared. *And when I had turned my self to all the works which my hands had done, and to all the labours wherein I had sweat in vain; I saw in all things vanity and affliction of mind.*

The testi-
mony of
St. *John*.

1 John 2.

This is the testimony of *Solomon*, upon his own experience, in these affairs: and if he had spoken it upon his wisdom only, being such as it was, we ought to believe him; but much more, seeing he affirms it of his own experience. But, if any man be not moved with this, let us bring another witness out of the New Testament, and such a one as was privy to the opinion of our Saviour Christ herein; and this is the holy Evangelist and Apostle St. *John*, who makes an earnest exhortation to all wise men, never to entangle themselves with the love of wordly affairs, using this reason for the

the same : *The world passes, and the concupiscence thereof* : that is to say, it is vain, fleeting, uncertain, and not permanent. And shewing the substance of this transitory vanity, he reduces all to three general heads or branches, saying, *All that is in this world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life.* By the first he comprehends all sensual pleasures used in the cherishing and pampering the flesh : by the second, all beauty and bravery of riches : by the third, he signifies the vanity of ambition in worldly honour and estimation.

The
general
branches
of worldly
vanities.

These then are the three general and most principal vanities of this life, wherein worldly men do weary out their brains ; to wit, ambition, covetousness, and carnal pleasure. Whereunto also other lesser vanities are directed, as to their superiors. And therefore it will not be amiss to consider these three in this place, together with their dependents ; seeing that every one of these three have divers branches depending on them ; especially that which I will handle here first, call'd by *St. John, pride of life*, or ambition, whereunto belong these six members that follow.

Three
principal
vanities.

First, vain-glory, which is a certain disordinate desire to be well thought of, well spoken of, praised and glorified by men. And this is as great a vanity, tho' it be common to many, as if a man should run up and down the streets after a feather flying in the air, toss'd hither and thither with the blasts of infinite mens mouths. For as this man might weary out himself before he got the thing which he follow'd, and yet when he had it, he had got but a feather ; so a vain-glorious man may labour a good while, before he obtain the praise which he desires. And when he has it, it is nothing worth, being but the breath of a few mens mouths, that alters upon every light occasion, and now makes him great, now little, now good, now bad, now nothing at all. Christ himself may be an example of this, who was toss'd to and fro in the speech of men.

Vain-
glory.

Mat. 27. Some said he was a *Samaritan*, and had a devil; others
John 8. said, he could not be a Prophet, or of God, because
 he kept not the sabbath-day: others ask'd, if he were
 not of God, how he could do so many miracles? so
 that there was a schism or division among them about
 this matter, as St. *John* affirms. Finally, upon *Palm-*
John 9. *Sunday* they received him into *Jerusalem* with triumph
Mat. 21. of *Hosanna*, casting their apparel under his feet: but
Mat. 11. the *Thursday* and *Friday* next ensuing, they cried *crucify*
Mark 27. him; and preferr'd the life of *Barrabas*, a wicked
Luke 23. murderer, before his.

The mi-
 fery of de-
 pending on
 other mens
 mouths.

Now, dear Christian, if they dealt thus with the
 Saviour of the world, why dost thou so labour and beat
 thy self about this bubble of vain-glory? why dost thou
 cast thy labour into the wind? why dost thou put thy
 riches in the lips of mutable men, where every flat-
 terer may rob thee of them? St. *Paul* was of ano-
 ther mind, when he said, I esteem little to be judged
 of you, or of the day of man. And he had reason:
 for what cares he that runs at the tilt, if the ignorant
 people that stand by, give sentence against him, so the
 judges give it for him? if the blind man in the way to
Jericho, had depended on the liking and approbation
 of the goers by; he had never received the benefit of
 his sight; for they dissuaded him from running and
 crying so vehemently after Christ. It is a miserable
 thing for a man to be a windmill, which grinds not,
 nor makes meal, but according as the wind serves. If
 the gale is strong, he whirls about briskly; but if the
 wind is slack, he presently relents: so if you praise
 the vain-glorious man, he will run; but if he feels
 not the gale blow, he is out of heart. He is like the
Dan. 31. *Babylonians*, who with a little sweet musick, were made
 to adore any thing whatsoever.

Prov. 27. The Scripture says most truly, *As silver is tried in*
 A fit simi- *the forge, and gold in the furnace, so a man is proved*
 litudie. *by the mouth of him that praises.* For as gold, if it
 be good, takes no hurt thereby; if it be evil, it goes
 all

all into fume; so does a vain man, by praise and commendation. How many have we seen puff'd up with mens praises, and almost put besides themselves for joy; and yet afterwards brought down with a contrary wind, and driven near despair by contempt? How many do we see daily, as the Prophet did in his days, commended in their sins, and blest'd in their wickedness? how many palpable and intolerable flatteries do we hear, both used and accepted daily, and no man cries out with good king *David*, Away with this oil and ointment of sinners, let it not come upon my head? is not all this vanity? is it not madness, as the Scripture calls it? the glorious Angels in heaven seek no honour to themselves, but all to God; and thou poor worm of the earth, desirest to be glorified? the four and twenty elders in the *Apocalypse*, took off their crowns and cast them at the feet of the lamb; and thou wouldst pluck forty from the lamb to thy self, if thou couldst. O fond creature! how truly says the Prophet, *Man is made like vanity*, that is, like his own vanity, as light as the very vanities themselves, which he follows. And yet the wise man more expressly, *In vanitate sua appenditur*: the sinner is weigh'd in vanity; that is, by the vanity which he follows, is seen how light and vain a sinful man is. And is there any man who will leave the service of God, and his own salvation, for fear of what the world will say or think of him? what imports thee, dear brother, in the next life, what they all say of thee here? Think then upon this, and esteem it as a vanity indeed.

Psal. 9.

Psal. 140.

Apoc. 4.

Psal. 144.

Eccles. 23.

The second vanity that belongs to ambition, is desire of worldly honour, dignity, and promotion. And this is a great matter in the sight of a worldly man; this is a jewel of rare price, and worthy to be bought with any labour, or peril whatsoever. The love of this hinder'd the great men that were Christians in *Jewry*, from confessing Christ openly. The love of this hinder'd *Pilate* from setting *JESUS* free, as he was bound

Worldly
honour and
promotion.

John 11.
John 19.

Acts 26.

bound in conscience. The love of this hinder'd *Agrippa* and *Festus* from making themselves Christians, altho' they esteem'd *St. Paul's* doctrine to be true. The love of this daily hinders infinite men from embracing the means of their salvation. But, alas! these men do not see the vanity hereof. *St. Paul* says, not without

1 Cor. 2.

just cause: *Be not made children in sense.* Children are wont to esteem a painted table more than a rich jewel. And such is the painted dignity of this world, got with much labour, maintain'd with great care and sollicitude, and lost with intolerable grief and sorrow. For the better conceiving whereof, ponder a little with thy self, gentle reader, any state of dignity that thou couldst desire, and think how many have had that or the like before thee. Remember how many have ascended, and how they have descended down again: and imagine with thy self, which was greater, either the joy in getting, or the sorrow of losing it. Where are now all those emperors, those kings, those princes and prelates, who once rejoiced so much at their own advancement? where are they now, I say? who talks or thinks of them? are they not forgot, and cast into their graves long ago? and do not men boldly walk over their heads now, whose faces could not be look'd on, without fear in their life? what good then have their dignities done them?

The vanity
of worldly
honour.

It is a wonderful thing to consider the vanity of this worldly honour. It is like a man's own shadow, which the more a man runs after, the more it flies from him: and when he flies from it, it follows him again; and the only way to catch it, is to fall down to the ground upon it. So we see that those men who desired honour in this world, are now forgot; and those who fled most from it, and cast themselves lowest of all men by humility, are now most of all honour'd: honour'd, I say, most, even by the world it self, whose enemies they were whilst they lived. For who is honour'd more now, who is more commended and
remember'd

remember'd than *St. Paul*, and his like who so much *Phil. 3.* despised worldly honour in this life, that he made less account thereof than of common dung? most vain then is the pursuit of worldly honour, which neither contents the mind, nor eases the afflicted body, nor continues with the possessor, nor leaves behind it any benefit or content, and consequently ought not to prevail with any man, against this great resolution, of which here we treat.

The third vanity that belongs to ambition or pride of life, is nobility of flesh and blood; a great pearl in the eye of the world, and indeed to be esteem'd, when it is join'd with virtue, and accompanied with the fear of God; but otherwise both in it self, and in the sight of almighty God, a meer trifle and vanity. Which holy *Job* altho' he was of noble parentage, well understood, when he writ these words: *I have said to rottenness, thou art my father; my mother and my sister to worms.* He that will behold the nobility of his ancestors, let him look into their graves, and see whether *Job* says truly or no. True nobility was never begun but by virtue; and therefore, as it is a testimony of valour and virtue in the predecessors; so ought it to be a spur to the same in the successors. And he who holds the name thereof by descent only, without the substance of virtue, is a meer alien, in respect of his ancestors; from whom he degenerates, and has nothing of theirs, but only the bare outward shew. Of which sort of men, God says by a Prophet, *They are become abominable, as those things which they loved. --- Their glory from birth, and from the womb, and from conception.* That is to say, they vaunt and glory in their ancestors, progenitors, and noble birth, whereas having no virtue in them, correspondent to their birth, but following their sensual appetites, and setting their affections on wicked and abominable delights; they are made in like manner abominable, and contemptible both to God and man. And in this sense
it

The vanity
of worldly
nobility.

Job 17.

Hosea 9.

it is a fond vanity to beg credit of dead men, whereas we deserve none our selves; to seek old titles of honour from our ancestors, we being utterly incapable thereof, by our own base manners and behaviour. Christ clearly confounded this vanity, when being descended himself of the greatest nobility and race of kings that ever was in the world; and besides that, being also the Son of God, a much higher title, yet he call'd himself ordinarily by the name of *The Son of man*; that is to say, th Son of a poor Virgin, for otherwise he was not Son of man; and further than this also, he call'd himself a shepherd, which in the world is a name of contempt. And when long before his incarnation he was to make a king first in *Israel*, he did not seek out the ancientest blood, but took *Saul*, of the lowest tribe of *Jews*, to wit, of *Benjamin*, and after him *David*, the poorest shepherd of all his brethren. And when he came into the world, he sought not the noblest men to make princes of the earth, that is, to make Apostles; but took of the poorest and simplest, thereby to confound, as one of them says, the foolish vanity of this world, in making so great account of the pre-eminence of a little flesh and blood in this life, where merit of virtue is not found. Tho' yet on the other side, where worldly nobility and gentry is furnish'd with spirit and virtue, it is, no doubt, an excellent ornament, and may do singular much good in God's service, and is highly respected by him, as by many examples may be proved: but it is no wise a sufficient motive to hinder any man from resolving to serve God, because he is noble; for in this respect it is a meer trifle indeed.

The vanity
of worldly
wisdom.

1 Cor. 3.

The fourth vanity that belongs to ambition or pride of life, is worldly wisdom; whereof the Apostle says, *The wisdom of this world is folly with God*. If it be folly, then it is great vanity, no doubt, to delight and boast so much in it, as men do, especially against the wisdom of God and his Saints. It is a strange and wonderful thing to behold, how contrary the judgments

of

of God are to the judgments of worldly men. Who would not think, that the wise men of this world were the fittest to be chosen to do Christ service in his Church? yet St. *Paul* says, God has not chosen many wise men, according to the flesh. Who would not think but that a worldly wise man might also easily make a wise Christian? yet St. *Paul* says no; except first he become a fool: *If any man seem to be wise amongst you, let him become a fool that he may be wise.* 1 Cor. 1. 1 Cor. 3. Vain then, and of no account is the wisdom of this world, except it is subject to the wisdom of God. And whosoever, tho' never so important in his own sight, and according to the world, shall condemn, in this worldly wisdom, and for worldly respects, them that betake themselves to God's service; his wisdom is folly in this behalf, and his prudence meer vanity: and so will he one day confess it to be, when he will come to cry out with those of his condition in the next life: we senseless and foolish worldly wise men did think the life of Saints to be meer madness; but now we come to see that they were wise indeed, and we only fools. And this is to be understood when human worldly wisdom contradicts spiritual wisdom, and not otherwise.

The fifth vanity belonging to this pride of life, is corporal beauty; whereof the wise man says, *Grace is deceitful and beauty is vain, the woman that fears our Lord shall be praised.* The vanity of beauty. Prov. 31. Which also king *David* meant, when he said, *Turn away mine eyes that they see not vanity.* Psalm 118. This is a singular great vanity, dangerous and deceitful. Beauty is compared by holy men, to a snake, which is fair without, and full of deadly poison within. If a man did but consider what infinite ruins and destructions have come by over-light liking thereof, he would beware of it. And if he did remember what foul dross lies under a fair skin, he would be little in love therewith, says a holy father. God has imparted certain sparkles of beauty, to his creatures on earth, thereby to draw us to consideration and love of his own beauty;

A lesson to
be read in
the beauty
of all crea-
tures.

beauty, whereof the other is but a shadow; even as a man finding a little issue of water, may seek out the fountain thereby; or happening upon a small vein of gold, may thereby come to the head mine it self. But we, like babes, delight our selves only with the fair cover of the book, and never consider what is writ in it. In all fair creatures that man beholds, he ought to read this lesson, says a father, that God could make a piece of earth so fair and lovely by imparting to it some spark of his beauty; how infinitely fair is he himself, and how worthy of love and admiration! and how happy shall we be when we shall come to enjoy his beautiful presence, from which all creatures do now take their beauty!

If we would exercise our selves in this manner of thinking, we might easily keep our hearts pure, chaste, and unspotted before God, in beholding the beauty of his creatures upon earth. But because we use not this passage from the creature to the Creator, but rest only in the external appearance of a deceitful face, giving scope to our foul thoughts, and wilfully setting on fire our own concupiscence; hence it is, that infinite people do perish daily, by occasion of this fond vanity of an alluring visage. I call it fond, because every child may discern the deceit and vanity thereof. For, take the fairest face in the world, wherewith infinite foolish men fell in love upon the sight thereof, and raze it over but with a little scratch, and all the comeliness is gone: let but an ague come for four or five days, and all its goodly beauty is destroy'd: let the soul depart but one half hour from the body, and this loving face is ugly to look on: let it lie but two days in the grave, or dead above ground, and those who were so earnestly in love with it before, will scarce abide to behold, or come near it. And if none of these things happen to it, yet old age quickly comes on, which rivels the skin, draws in the eyes, rots the teeth, and so disfigures the whole visage, that it be-
comes

How
quickly
beauty is
destroy'd.

becomes more contemptible and horrible now, than ever it was beautiful and alluring before. And what then can be greater vanity than this? what a greater madness than either to take pride in it, if we are endow'd with it our selves, or to endanger our souls for it, if we behold it in others? how miserable are those people, who bestow so much labour in procuring or preserving this corporal beauty, as if all their happiness consisted therein; yea many make it the chief obstacle of their resolution to serve God, and the principal occasion of their downfall and damnation.

The sixth vanity belonging to pride of life, is the glory of fine apparel, against which the Scripture says, *The vanity of apparel do not glory at any time.* Of all vanities, this is the greatest, which yet you see so common among men and women of this world, that nothing more: but consider the vanity. If *Adam* had never fallen, we had never used apparel; for that apparel was devised to cover the shame of our nakedness, and other infirmities contracted by that fall. Wherefore, we that take pride and glory in apparel, do as much as if a beggar should glory and take pride in the old clouts that cover his sores: *St. Paul* said to a bishop, That if we have wherewithal to cover our selves we ought to be content. And *Christ* touch'd deeply the danger of nice apparel, when he commended so much *St. John Baptist* for his coarse and austere attire, adding *Qui mollibus vestiuntur in domibus Regum sunt:* They who are not like *John*, but go cloth'd in soft and delicate apparel, are in kings courts, *i. e.* in kings courts of this world, but not in the court of the king of heaven. For which cause in the description of the rich man damn'd this is not omitted by our Saviour. *That he was apparel'd in purple and silk;* as tho' this also had been concurring towards his damnation. On the contrary, the Scripture setting down the singular sanctity of *Elias* the Prophet, names also his poor apparel. It is a wonderful thing to consider the different proceeding of God, and of the

The vanity of apparel.

Eccles. 11.

Gen. 3.

1 Tim. 6.

Mat. 3. 11.

Luke 7.

Luke 16.

4 Reg. 1.

Gen. 3.

Heb. 12.

The
extream
vanity and
poverty of
man.

Psalms 77.

The second
head of
worldly
vanities.
Concupi-
scence of
the eyes.
1 Tim. 6.

the world in this affair ; God himself was the first that ever made apparel in this world, and he made it for the most noble of all our ancestors in paradise ; and yet he made it but of beasts skins. And St. *Paul* testifies of the noblest Saints of the Old Testament, that they were cover'd only with goat skins, and with the hairs of camels. What vanity is it then for us to be so curious in apparel, and to take such pride therein as we do ? we rob and spoil all sort of creatures upon earth, to cover our backs, and adorn our bodies. From one, we take his wool, from another his skin ; from another his hair and furr : and from some other, their very excrements, as the silk, which is nothing else but the excrements of worms. Nor yet content with this, we come to fish, and beg of them pearls to hang about us. We go down into the ground for gold and silver ; and turn up the sands of the sea for precious stones : and having borrow'd all this of other creatures far more base than our selves, we go up and down, to draw the eyes of men upon us, as if all this now were our own. When the stone shines upon our finger, we think to shine thereby. When silver, gold, and silks giltter on our backs, we look as great as if all that beauty came from us. When cats dung smells in our garments, we would have men think, that we send forth sweet odours from our selves. And thus, as the Prophet says, We pass over our days in vanity, and do not perceive our own extream folly. And yet this folly is so powerful with many, that not to leave off this vanity of gay apparel, is a sufficient motive to hinder them from the resolution we propose of God's service, and their own everlasting good.

And thus much may suffice, concerning the general head of worldly vanities, term'd by St. *John*, *pride of life*. There follows the second, which he calls *Concupiscence of the eyes* ; whereunto the ancient fathers have referr'd all vanities of riches, and wealth of this world. Of this St. *Paul* writes to *Timothy* : *Command*
the

the rich of this world, not to be high minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches. The reason of which speech is given by the Scripture in another place, when it says, Riches shall not profit in the day of revenge; Prov. 11: that is, at the day of death and judgment. Which thing the rich men of this world do confess themselves, tho' too late, now being in torments: What commodity has the vanity of riches brought to us? all which evidently declares the great vanity of worldly riches which can do the possessor no good at all, when he has most need of their help. They slept their sleep, says the Prophet, and all the men of riches found nothing in their hands: that is, rich men have pass'd over this life, as men pass over a dream, imagining themselves to have golden mountains and treasures wherewith to help themselves in all needs that will occur; and when they awake, at the day of their death, they find themselves to have nothing in their hands that can do them good. In respect whereof, the Prophet Baruch ask's this question: Where are they now, who heap'd together gold and silver, and who made no end of their scraping together? and he answers himself immediately, Exterminati sunt, & ad inferos descenderunt: They are destroy'd, and are gone down to hell. To the like effect says St. James: Go now you rich men, weep, howling in your miseries, which shall come to you; your riches are corrupt: and your garments are eaten of moths. Your gold and silver is rusted: and their rust shall be as a testimony to you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. You have stored to your selves wrath in the last days.

Prov. 11:

Sap. 5:

Psal. 75:

Baruch 3:

James 5:

All this, and much more, is spoken by the Holy Ghost, to signify the dangerous vanity of worldly wealth, and the folly of those men who labour so much to procure the same unjustly, or having it, use the same in order to vanity, and not to the profit of their own souls. And surely, if so many skilful physicians, as I have here alleged holy Scriptures, should agree together, that such or such meats were

A comparison.

M in

unwholsom

unwholsom and perilous: I think few men would venture to eat thereof, tho' otherwise in sight, smell, and taste, they appeared sweet and pleasant. How then comes it to pass, that so many earnest admonitions of God himself, stop us not from the disordinate love of

- Psalms* 61. this dangerous vanity? *If riches abound*, said God by the Prophet: *set not your hearts upon them*. The
Eccles. 31. wise man says: *He that loves gold, shall not be justified. With great anger am I angry upon the wealthy nations*, says God by *Zachary*. Christ says, *Amen, I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*. And again, *Wo to you that are rich, because you have your consolation*. Finally, St. Paul says
1 Tim. 6. generally of all and to all, *They that will be made rich, fall into temptation, and the snares of the devil, and many desires unprofitable and hurtful, which drown man into destruction and perdition*.

The pre-
 tence of
 wife and
 children
 refuted.

Can any thing be spoke more effectually, to dissuade from the love of riches? must not now all covetous men of the world condemn themselves in their own consciences? let them excuse themselves as much as they will, by the pretence of wife and children, and kinsfolks, as they are wont, saying, they mean nothing else but to provide for their sufficiency. But does Christ our Saviour admit of this excuse? he ask'd the rich man that had fill'd his barns, who should have those riches? for that very night they were to take his soul from him: and he might have answer'd, his wife, children, and kindred; but he durst not, because the interrogation began with *Thou fool*: and indeed it is a great folly, if we consider it well: for tell me, dear Christian, what comfort can it be to an afflicted father in hell, to remember that by his means his wife and children live in plenty on earth, and that by his eternal wo, they enjoy some few years pleasures? no, no, this vanity, is a meer deceit of our spiritual enemy. For within a moment after we are dead, we shall care no more for wife, children, father, mother, or brother in this matter, than

we shall for a meer stranger; and a penny given in alms for God's sake, whilst we lived, will comfort us more at that Day, than thousands of pounds bestow'd upon our kindred out of the natural love we bear our own flesh and blood. Which one point would to Christ all worldly men would consider, and then, no doubt, they would never take such care for kindred as they do, and be so sparing in doing good to themselves, especially upon their death-beds, whence presently they are to depart to that place, where flesh and blood holds no more privilege, nor riches have any power to deliver them; but only such as were well bestow'd in the service of God, or given to the poor for his name's sake. In which respect only a rich man is happy, if he knows but how to use his happiness whilst he has time, which few do. And this shall be sufficient for this point of riches.

The third branch of worldly vanities is call'd by St. John, *Concupiscence of the flesh*; which contains all pleasures and carnal recreations of this life; as are, banquetting, laughing, playing, and such other delights, wherewith our flesh is much delighted in this world. And altho' in this kind there is a certain measure to be allow'd to the godly, for the convenient maintenance of their health, as also in riches it is not to be reprehended, yet that all those worldly solaces are not only vain, but also dangerous in that excess and abundance, as worldly wealthy men seek and use them, appears plainly by these words of Christ: *Wo to you that are fill'd: because you shall be hungry. Wo to you that now do laugh, because you shall mourn and weep.* And again in St. John's Gospel, speaking to his Apostles, and by them to all others, he says, *You shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice:* making it a distinctive sign between the good and the bad, that the one shall mourn in this life, and the other rejoice and make themselves merry.

The third
head of
worldly
vanities.

Luke 6.

John 16.

The very same does *Job* confirm of both the one and the other sort: for he says of worldlings, *they lead their days in wealth, and in a moment go down into hell.*

Job 21. But of the godly, he says in his own person, *Before I eat I sigh.* And in another place, *I fear'd all my works, knowing that thou didst not spare the offender.*

Job 9. The reason whereof the wise man yet further expresses, saying, *Their works are in the hand of God, and yet man knows not whether he be worthy of love or hatred: but all things are reserved uncertain for the time to come.* And old *Tobias* insinuates yet another cause when he says, *What manner of joy shall be to me which sit in darkness?* speaking literally of his corporal blindness; but yet leaving it also to be understood of spiritual and internal darkness.

Why good men are sad in this life. These are then the causes, besides external afflictions which God often sends, why the godly live more grave, sad, and fearful in this life, according to the counsel of *St. Paul*, than wicked men do; and why also they often sigh and weep, as *Job* and *Christ* do affirm; to wit, because they often remember the severe justice of almighty God; their own frailty in sinning; the secret judgment of his predestination uncertain to us, the vale of misery and desolation wherein they live here; which even made the very Apostles themselves to lament, as *St. Paul* affirms, altho' they had much less cause than we have. In respect whereof, we are desired to pass over this life in care, watchfulness, fear, and trembling. In regard whereof also, the wise man says, *It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of banquetting.* And again, *the heart of wise men where sadness is: and the heart of fools where mirth is.* Finally in consideration of these things, the Scripture says, *Blessed is the man who is always fearful.* Which is nothing else, but that which the Holy Ghost commands every man by *Micheas* the Prophet: *To walk solicitous with thy God; thinking upon his commandments; how we keep and observe the same; how we resist and mortify*

mortify our bodies upon earth; how we bestow our time, talents, and riches lent us; how we labour in good works for the gaining of heaven, what account we could yield, if presently we were to die, &c. Which thoughts, if they might have place with us, would cut off a great many of those worldly pastimes, wherewith the careless sort of sinners are overwhelm'd; I mean, of those good fellowships in eating, drinking, laughing, singing, disputing, and other such vanities that distract us most. Hereof Christ gave us a most notable advertisement, in this that he oftentimes wept: and for example, the holy Scripture mentions, at the resurrection of *Lazarus*, and upon *Jerusalem*. But *John 10.* he is never read to have laughed in all his life. Each *Luke 19.* man's nativity and death is also a signification and figure of this: which two extremities, I mean, our beginning and ending, being reserved by God in his own hands to dispose of; are appointed to us in sorrow, grief, and weeping, as we see and feel. But the middle part thereof, which is our life, being left by almighty God in our hands, we pass it over with vain delights, never thinking whence we came, nor whither we go.

A wise traveller passing by his inn, altho' he see pleasant meats set before him to feast at his pleasure; yet he forbears and restrains his appetite upon consideration of the price, and of the journey he has to make; and takes only so much as he knows well how to discharge the next morning at his departure. But a fool lays hands on every delicate bit that is presented to his sight, and plays the prince for a night or two; but the next morning when it comes to the reckoning, he wishes he had lived only on bread and drink, rather than to be so troubled as he is for the payment. The custom of God's Church is to fast the eve of every feast, and then to rejoice the next day following, which is the festival it self. And this represents the abstinent life of good men in this world, thereby to rejoice in the world to come. But the

A similitude.

custom of the world is quite contrary ; that is, to eat and drink merrily first at the tavern, and after to let the host bring in his reckoning. They eat, drink, and laugh, and the host scores up all in the mean time ; and when the time comes that they must pay, many heart is sad, that was pleasant before.

Prov. 14. This very self same thing holy Scripture affirms also of the pleasures of this world : *Laughter shall be mingled with sorrow, and mourning occupies the latter ends of joy.* The devil that plays the host in this world, and will serve you at an inch with what delight or pleasure you desire, writes down all in his book ; and at the day of your departure, which is, at your death, he will bring in the whole reckoning, and charge you with it all, and then will follow that which God promises to worldlings, by the Prophet *Amos* : *I will turn your festivities into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation.* Yea, and more than this, if you be not able to discharge the reckoning, you may chance to hear that other dreadful sentence of Christ in the *Apocalypse* : *As much as she has glorified herself and has been in delicacies, so much give her torment and mourning.*

Apoc. 18.

The conclusion of the first point.

Psalms 38.

Wherefore to conclude this point, and therewithal this first part of the parable, touching vanities ; we may truly say with the Prophet *David*, of a worldly minded man : *Doubtless all things are vanity, every man living.* That is to say, both vanity in ambition, vanity in riches, vanity in pleasures, vanity in all things which they now esteem. And therefore I may well end with the words of almighty God by the Prophet *Isaiah* : *Wo to you that draw iniquity in ropes of vanity.*

Isaiah 5.

The ropes of vanity.

Psalms 31.

These ropes are those vanities of promotion, dignity, nobility, beauty, riches, delights, and other such like before-mention'd, which always draw with them some iniquity and sin. For which cause holy *David* says to his Lord, *Thou hast hated them that observe vanities unprofitably.*

Psalms 39.

And lastly, for this cause the Holy Ghost pronounces, generally of all men, *Blessed is the man whose hope is in the name*

name of our Lord, and has not had regard to vanities and false madness.

S E C T. II.

How worldly vanities are also deceits.

NOW we come to the second part proposed in this chapter (which was also the second point contain'd in Christ's parable) to shew how this world, and the pleasing commodities thereof, are not only vanities for the most part, but also deceits: for indeed they perform not those small trifles which they promise their followers. Wherein the world may be compared to that wretched and ungrateful deceiver *Laban*, who made poor *Jacob* serve him seven years for fair *Rachel*, and in the end deceived him with foul *Lia*. What false promises does the world daily make us? to one it promises long life and health, and cuts him off in the midst of his days. To another it promises great wealth and promotion, and after long service it performs no part thereof. To another it promises great honour by large expences, but under-hand it casts him into contempt and beggary. To another it promises great advancement by marriage, but never gives him ability to come to his desire. Go over the whole world, behold countries, view provinces, look into cities, hearken at the doors and windows of private houses, of princes palaces, of secret chambers, and you will see and hear nothing else but lamentable complaints: one, because he has lost; another because he has not won; a third, because he is not satisfied; ten thousand, because they are deceived.

Mat. 12.

Gen. 19.
False promises of the world.

Can there be a greater deceit, for example, than to promise renown and memory, as the world does to its followers, and yet to forget them as soon as they are dead? who now remembers one of forty thousand, that thought themselves great people whilst they were in this world, captains, soldiers, counsellors, dukes, earls, princes, prelates, emperors, kings, queens, lords

The false promises of renown.

Psalm 9.
Job 13.
Psalm 1.

A comparison.

and ladies? who I say remembers them now? who once thinks or speaks of them? has not their memory perished with their sound, as the Prophet foretold? Did not *Job* promise truly, That their remembrances should be like ashes trodden under foot? and *David*, That they should be dust blown abroad with the wind? one of the first holy hermites named *Paul*, hid himself, as *St. Jerom* reports in his life, fourscore and ten years in a wilderness, without knowing or speaking with any man, or once shewing or revealing himself to the world. And yet now the world both remembers and honours his memory. But many a king and emperor have labour'd all their life to be known in the world, and yet are now forgotten. So that the world in this point, is like a covetous and forgetful host; who if he see his old guest come by his inn in a beggarly state, all his money being spent, he seems not to know him: and if the guest marvels thereat, and says, that he has often come that way, and spent much money in the house; the other answers, it may be so, my friend, for many pass this way, and we use not to keep account of all. But what is the way to make this host remember you? It is to use him ill as you pass by, as *St. Paul*, and his like, did with the world, and he will remember you as long as he lives, and many times will talk of you, when you are far off from him.

What the
 deceits of
 the world
 are.

Aug. 13.
Medit.

Infinite are the deceits and dissimulations of the world: it seems goodly, fair and pompous in outward shew; but when it comes to handling, it is nothing but a feather; when it comes to sight, it is nothing but a shadow; when it comes to weight, it is nothing but smoke; when it comes to opening, it is nothing but an image of plaisterwork, of old rags and patches within. “O miserable and most deceitful world, says *St. Augustine*, whose grief is true, and delights false; “whose sorrows are certain, and pleasures uncertain; “whose pains are permanent, and repose transitory; “whose

“ whose toils are intolerable, and rewards most contemptible; whose promises are princely, and payments beggarly; whose miseries are void of all consolation, and whose happiness is mingled with all kind of misery. ”

To know the miseries of the world, you must go a little from it, says one. For, as they who walk in a mist, do not see it so well, as those who stand upon a hill out of it: so fares it in discerning the world; whose property is, to blind them that come to it, to the end they may not see their own state: even as a raven first of all strikes out the poor sheep's eyes, to the end she may not see the way to escape from its tyranny.

A similitude.

So then after the world has once bereft the worldling of his spiritual sight, so that he can judge no longer between good and evil, vanity and verity, then also it rocks him asleep, at his ease and pleasure. It binds him sweetly, it deceives him pleasantly, it torments him in great peace and rest; it has a proud spirit presently ready, which places him on the pinnacle of greedy ambition, and thence shews him all the dignities and preferments of the world; it has twenty false merchants, who in the dark shew him the first end of fair and precious cloths; but he must never look into the whole pieces, nor carry them to the light, thereby to discern them. It has four hundred false Prophets to flatter him, as *Achab* had, who must keep him from the hearing of *Micheas* counsel; that is, from the remorse of his own conscience, which tells him the truth. It has a thousand cunning fishers to lay before him pleasant baits, but all furnished with most sharp and dangerous hooks within. It has infinite strumpets of *Babylon*, to offer him drink in golden cups, but all mingled with most deadly poison. It has in every door an alluring *Jael* to entice him to the milk of pleasures and delights; but all have their hammer and nails in their hand to murder him, when he falls asleep. It has in every corner a flattering *Joab* to embrace with one arm, and kill with

The practice of the World.

Mat. 4.

3 Reg. 22.

Apoc. 17.

Jud. 4.

2 Reg. 1.

Mat. 24.

John 21.The true
figure of
the world.

with the other. A false *Judas*, to give a kiss, and therewith to betray him, and deliver him to torments.

Finally, it has all the deceits, all the dissimulations, all the flatteries, all the treasons, that possibly can be devised. It hates them that love it; deceives them that trust in it; it afflicts them that serve it; it reproaches them that honour it; it damns them that follow it; and most of all forgets them that labour most of all for it. And to be brief in this matter, do what you can for this world, and love it, and adore it as much as you will, yet in the end you will find it a right

1 Reg. 25.

Nabal, who after many benefits received from *David*, yet when *David* came to have need of him, he answer'd, *Who is David, or who is the son of Isai, that I should know him?* With great cause then the Prophet

Psalms 4.

David said, *Ye sons of men, how long are you of heavy heart, why love you vanity and seek lying?* he calls the world not a liar, but a lie it self, for the exceeding great fraud and deceit which it uses in all its pretences.

S E C T. III.

How the world is Thorns.

HAVING now declared how the commodities of this world, that hinder men from resolution, are both vanities, and fallacies; next is to be examined, in what sense our Saviour also calls them, thorns. Of which *St. Gregory* writes thus: "Who would ever

Mat. 13. " have believed me, says he, if I had call'd riches

Hom. 5. " thorns, as *Christ* here does, seeing thorns prick,

in Evang. " and riches are so pleasant? and yet truly are they

" call'd thorns, for with the pricks of their careful

" cogitations, they tear and make the minds of world-

" ly men bloody." By which words this holy father signifies that even as a man's naked body, toss'd and tumbled among many thorns, cannot but be much rent and torn, and made bloody with the pricks thereof;

thereof: so a worldly man's soul beaten with the cares and thoughts of gaining worldly wealth, cannot but be vex'd with restless pricking of the same, and wounded also with many temptations of sin, which occur. This *Solomon* in the places before alleged, signifies when he does not only call the riches and pleasures of this world, *vanity of vanities*, that is the greatest vanity of all other vanities; but also *affliction of spirit*: giving us thereby to understand, that where these vanities are, and the love of them once enters; there is no more the peace of God which surpasses all understanding; there is no longer rest or quiet of mind; but war of desires, vexation of thoughts, tribulation of fear, pricking of cares and uneasiness of soul, which is indeed a most miserable affliction of spirit. *Eccles. 1, 2, 3, 4. Phil. 4.*

And the reason hereof is, because as a clock can never stand still, as long as the poises hang thereat; so a worldly man, having infinite cares, thoughts, and anxieties, hanging on his mind, as poises upon the clock, can never have rest or repose day or night, but is forced to beat his brains when other men sleep, for the compassing those trifles wherewith he is incumber'd. O how many rich men in the world feel this to be true! *Exodus 8.* how many ambitious men prove it daily, and yet will not deliver themselves out of these miserable troubles! Of all the plagues sent to *Ægypt*, that of the flies was one of the most troublesome, and fastidious; for they never suffer'd men to rest, but the more they were beaten off, the more they came upon them. So of all the miseries and vexations that God lays upon worldly men, this is not the least, to be tormented with the cares of that thing which they think the greatest felicity, and not be able to beat them off by any means. They rush upon them in the morning as soon as they awake; they accompany them in the day; they forsake them not at night; they follow them to bed, they hinder them from their sleep; they afflict them in their dreams; and finally, they are those importune and *A comparison. The torments of rich men in their riches.*

and unmerciful tyrants which God threatens to wicked men, by *Jeremiah* the Prophet: *You shall serve strange gods day and night, which shall not give you any rest.* And the cause thereof which God alleges in the same chapter is, *Because I have taken away my peace from this people,* says our Lord, and *commiserations.* A very heavy sentence to all those that lie under the yoke and bondage of those miserable afflicting vanities.

But yet the Prophet *Isaiah* has a much more terrible description of the state of these men: They put their trust in things of nothing, says he, and talk vanities: they conceive labour and bring forth iniquity: they break the eggs of serpents, and weave the webs of spiders: he that shall eat of their eggs, shall die; and that which is hatch'd thence, shall be a cockatrice. Their webs shall not make cloth to cover them, for their works are unprofitable; and the work of iniquity is in their hands. These are the words of the Prophet, declaring to us by most significant similitudes, how dangerous thorns the riches and pleasures of this world are. And first he says, *They put their hope in things of nothing, and talk vanities*; to signify that he means the vanities and vain men of this world, who commonly do talk of the things which they love best, and wherein they place their greatest confidence. Secondly, he says, *They have conceived labour, and brought forth iniquity*: alluding here to the child-birth of women, who first conceive in their wombs, and then after a great deal of labour, bring forth their infant: even so worldly men, after a great time of fatigue and labour in vanities, do bring forth no other fruit but sin and iniquity. For that is the effect of those vanities, as he says in another chapter, crying out to such kind of men, *Wo to you, that draw iniquity in cords of vanity.*

The explanation of the words of *Isaiah*.

Two significant similitudes.

But yet to express this matter more forcibly, he uses two other similitudes, saying, *They have broken the eggs of asps, and have woven the webs of spiders*: signifying by the one, the vanity of these worldly cares, and

and by the other the danger thereof. The spider we see takes great pains, and labours many days together, to weave her self a web; and in the end, and when all is done, comes a puff of wind, or some other little chance, and breaks all in pieces. Even as he in the Gospel, who had taken great pains and care in heaping riches together, in plucking down his old barns, and building up new; when he was come to say to his soul, now be merry, that night his soul was taken from him, and all his labour lost. Therefore *Isaiab* says in this place, That the webs of these weavers shall not make them cloaths to cover themselves withal, because their works are unprofitable. *Luke 12.*
Ibid.

The other comparison contains matter of great danger and fear. For as the bird that sits upon the eggs of serpents, by breaking and hatching them, brings forth a perilous brood to her own destruction; so those that sit, as it were, and brood upon the vanities of the world, and do affect them over-much, hatch also at last their own destruction. The reason whereof is, as *Isaiab* says, *Because the work of iniquity is in their hands*: still meaning, that a man cannot love and follow these vanities, or entangle himself with their ropes, as his former phrase is, but that commonly he draws on much iniquity therewith. Which because it kills the soul that consents to it, therefore *Isaiab* compares it to the brood of serpents that kills the birds which bring them forth into the world. And finally, *Moses* uses the like similitudes, when he says of vain and wicked men, *Of the vinyard of Sodom is their vinyard, and of the suburbs of Gomorrah: Their grape the grape of gall, and the clusters most bitter. The gall of dragons their wine, and the venom of asps incurable.* By which dreadful and loathsom comparisons, he would give us to understand, that the sweet pleasures of this world are indeed deceitful thorns, and will prove in the end most bitter and dangerous, if a man gives himself over to them, or uses them not with great moderation and sobriety. *Dent. 12.*

S E C T. IV.

The World is Misery.

Brevity
and insta-
bility.

Eccles. 41.

Mac. 1.

Luke 12.

THE fourth point that we have to consider is, how this word *misery*, that is, calamity and affliction of mind, may be verified of the world, and of the felicity thereof. Which thing, altho' it may appear sufficiently by that which has been said before, yet, I will, as I promised, discuss it a little further in this place, by some particulars. And among many afflictions which I might here recount, the first, and one of the greatest is, the brevity and uncertainty of all worldly prosperities, when a man has got them. O how great a misery is this to a worldly man, that would have his pleasures constant and perpetual! O *death, how bitter is thy remembrance*, says the Scripture, *to a man that has peace in his riches*! we have seen many men advanced in haste, and in haste fallen again, and not flourish two months in their prosperity. We have heard of divers married in great joy, and not to have lived six days in their felicity. We have read of strange matters that have happen'd in these kinds, and we see daily no few examples with our own eyes. What a grief was it, think you, to *Alexander the Great*, that having subdued in twelve years, the greatest part of the world, he should then be forced to die, when he was most desirous to live, and when he was to take most joy and comfort in his victories? what a sorrow was it to the rich man in the Gospel, to hear upon a sudden; even this night thou must die? what a misery will this be to many worldlings, when it comes, who now build palaces, purchase lands, heap riches, procure dignities, make marriages, join kindreds, as tho' there were never any end of all these matters? what a doleful day will this be to them, I say, when they must be turn'd off, no otherwise than princes mules are wont to be

be at the end of a journey ; that is, their treasure taken from them, and their gall'd backs only left to themselves ? For as we see these mules of princes go all the day long, loaden with treasures, and cover'd with fine trappings, but at night shaken off into some sorry stable, much bruised and gall'd with the carriage of those treasures : so many rich men who pass through this world, loaden with gold and silver, and gall their souls in carrying that load, are deprived of their rich burden at the day of death, and turn'd off with their wounded consciences, to the loathsom stable of hell and damnation.

A comparison.

Another misery join'd to the prosperity of this world, is the grievous counterpoise of discontents that every worldly pleasure has within it. Run over every delight and solace in this life, and see what sauce it has adjoin'd. Ask them that have had most proof thereof, whether they remain contented or no : the possession of riches is accompanied with so many fears and cares, as has been shew'd. The advancement to honours is subject to all the miserable servitude that can be devised. The pleasure of the flesh, even when it is lawful and honest, is accompanied, as St. Paul says, *with tribulation of the flesh* : but if it be with sin, it is ten thousand times more environ'd with all kind of miseries.

Discontents.

Who can reckon up the calamities of our body ? so many diseases, so many infirmities, so many mischances, so many dangers ? who can tell the passions of our mind that afflict us, now with sorrow, now with envy, now with disordinate love, now with desire, now with anger ? who can recount the adversities and misfortunes that befall us in regard to our goods ? who can number the hurts, and discontents, that daily come upon us from our neighbours ? one sues us at law, for our goods ; another pursues us for our life ; a third, by slander impugns our good name. One afflicts us by hatred, another by envy, another by flattery, another by deceit, another by revenge, another by

Miseries of body.

Of mind.

Of goods

Of neighbours.

by false witnesses, another by open arms. There are not so many days, nor hours in our lives, as there are miseries and contrarieties in the same. And further than this, the evil has this prerogative above the good, in our life; that one defect alone overwhelms and drowns a great number of pleasures together. As if a man had all the felicities heap'd together which this world could yield, and yet had but a pain in one tooth, all the other pleasures would not make him merry. And the like in other cases, whereof take an example in *Aman*, chief counsellor of *Assuerus*, who, because *Mardocheus* the Jew did not rise up to him, when he went by, nor honour him, as other men did; he said to his wife and friends, that all his other felicities were nothing, in respect of this one affliction.

Temptations and dangers.

Athan. in vita St. Antonii.

Psalms 10.

Besides all these miseries, there is yet another greater in some respect than the former; and that is, the infinite number of temptations, of snares, of enticements in the world, whereby men are daily drawn to perdition. So that no man is in security one day or hour, which is truly a great misery to him that considers well the danger; as it would be to him that in the night should walk upon a high slippery rock where every step might be his last ruin. *St. Athanasius* writes of *St. Antony* the hermit, that God reveal'd to him one day the state of the world; and he saw it all hang'd full of nets in every corner, and devils sitting by, to watch the same. The Prophet *David*, to signify the very same thing, that is, the infinite multitude of snares set to intrap worldly men in this life, says, *God shall rain snares*, &c. That is, God shall permit snares to be as plentiful for the perdition of evil men, as are the drops of rain which fall down from the skies: For every thing almost is a deadly snare to a carnal and loose-hearted man. Every enticing sight he sees, every lascivious word he hears, every pleasing thought he conceives; his youth, his age, his friends, enemies, honour, disgrace, riches, poverty, conversation, prosperity, the meat

meat he eats, the apparel he wears; all are snares to draw him to destruction that is not watchful, but yields himself over to sensuality.

From this then, and from the spiritual blindness, Facility of sinning. whereby worldly mens minds are incumber'd, follows the last and greatest misery of all that can be in this life; and that is the facility wherewith they run into sin. For truly says the Scripture, *Sin makes people miserable.* Prov. 14. And yet how easily men of the world commit sin, and and how little scruple they make of the matter, the Scripture signifies, where talking of such men, it says, *They eat the bread of impiety, and drink the wine of iniquity.* Prov. 4. That is, they venture with great facility, custom, and ease, upon any kind of sin that is offer'd to them, as a man drinks when he is thirsty. He that will not believe the saying of the wise man, let him try a little by his own experience, whether the matter be so or no. Let him walk out into the streets, behold the proceedings of men, view their behaviour, consider what is said, and treated in shops, in halls, in consistories, in judgment-seats, in palaces, and in common meeting-places abroad; what lying, what slandering, what deceiving there is. He will find, that of all things whereof men do make any account in the world, nothing is so little regarded, as to commit sin. He will see justice sold, verity betray'd, shame lost, and equity disguised. He will see the innocent condemn'd, the guilty deliver'd, the wicked advanced, the virtuous oppress'd. He will see many thieves flourish, many usurers bear great sway, many murderers and extortioners revered and honour'd, many fools put in authority; and divers who have nothing in them, but the bare shape and form of men, by reason of money, placed in great dignities to govern others. He will hear from almost every man's mouth vanity, pride, detraction, envy, deceit, dissimulation, wantonness, dissolution, lying, swearing, perjury, and blasphemy. Finally, he will see the greatest part of men govern The sinful
state of the
world. themselves,

themselves absolutely even as beasts do, by the motion of their passions, not by the law of justice, reason, religion or virtue: and thereby he may frame his conceit of the world in this behalf.

S E C T. V.

How the World strangles.

FROM this then follows the fifth point that Christ touches in his foresaid parable, which I promised to speak of here; to wit, that the love of this world, when it is immoderate, choaks up and strangles those whom it possesses, depriving them of all spiritual air of heavenly life, filling and replenishing them with a gross earthly spirit, quite contrary to the spirit of God. The Apostle says, *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is not his.* Now how contrary the spirit of Christ is to the spirit of the world, may appear by the fruits of Christ's spirit reckon'd up by St. Paul to the *Galatians*; to wit, charity, which is the root and mother of all good works: joy, in serving God: peace, or tranquillity of mind, in the storms of this world: patience, in adversity: longanimity, in expecting our reward: bounty, or goodness, in hurting no man: benignity, in sweet behaviour: meekness, when occasion of anger is given: fidelity, in performing our promises: modesty, without arrogancy: continency, from all kind of wickedness: chastity, in conserving a pure mind in a clean and unspotted body. Against such, says St. Paul, *there is no law.* And in the very same chapter he expresses the spirit of the world by the contrary effects and fruits, saying, *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, impudicities, lechery, serving of idols, witchcraft, enmities, contentions, emulations, anger, brawlings, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, commessations, and the like: which*

Rom. 8.

Gal. 5.

The effects
of the spirit
of Christ.

Gal. 5.

The effects
of the spi-
rit of this
world.

I foretel you, as I have foretold you, that they which do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God.

Here every man may judge of the spirit of the world, and of the spirit of Christ; and, reflecting on himself, conjecture whether he is of the one, or of the other. St. Paul gives two short rules in the very same place, for some proof and trial. The first is, *They that be Christ's have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences.* Which is as much as to say, they have so mortified their own bodies, that they commit none of the vices and sins repeated before; nor do yield to the concupiscences or temptations thereof. The second rule or direction is, *That if we live in spirit, we must walk in spirit.* That is, that our walking and behaviour must be a sign, whether we live or be dead in spirit. For if our walking be spiritual (such as I declared before by the true fruits thereof) then do we live and have life in spirit. But if our works be carnal (such as St. Paul now has described) then we are carnal, and dead in spirit; nor have we any part in Christ, or portion in his kingdom, not holding his spirit. And because all the world is full of those carnal works and brings forth no fruits of Christ's spirit, nor permits them to grow or prosper in such as follow the world, and its vanities: thence it is, that the Scripture always puts Christ and the world for opposite enemies, not compatible the one with the other, which is a point of no small consideration. Christ's words are plain: That *John 14.*

Two rules
of St. Paul
to know
our spirit,
Gal. 5.

Christ and
the world
enemies.

the world cannot receive the spirit of truth: Therefore they are opposite. And again, in the same Evangelist, he says of himself and his, That neither he, nor any *Ibid. 15.* of his servants, are of the world, tho' they live in the world. And yet further, in his most devout and heavenly prayer to his father, *Just father the world has not John 17.* known thee. For which cause St. John writes, *If any John 2.* man love the world, the charity of the father is not in him. And yet further, St. James, *Whosoever will be a friend of James 4.* this world, is made an enemy to God. What will worldly

men say to this? but yet hear further *St. Paul*, saying
1 Cor. 11. plainly, and without exception, That this world is to be
 damn'd. That is, they who live according to the spirit of
 the world. And *Christ* insinuates no less in *St. John's*
John 12. Gospel; but most of all, in that dreadful exception of his,
John 17. when praying to his Father for those that were to be sa-
 ved, he excepts the world by name. *Not for the world do*
I pray, says he: I do not ask mercy and pardon for the
 world, but those whom thou hast given me out of the
 world. Oh worldly men! what a dreadful exception
John 7. is this, made by the Saviour of the world himself; by
Luke 27. the lamb that takes away all sins; by him that asked
 pardon, even for his tormentors and crucifiers! what a
 point of terror, I say, is this, that now he excepts the
 world by name from his mercy! Oh that worldly men
 would but consider this one point only, they would not,
 I think, live so void of fear as they do, and so ena-
 mour'd with worldly designs.

Can any man marvel now, why *St. Paul* cries so
Rom. 12 carefully to us, *Be not conform'd to this world?* and
Titus 2. again, That we should utterly renounce *all secular de-*
sires? can any man marvel why *St. John*, who was
 most privy above others, to *Christ's* holy meaning
1 John 2. herein, says to us in such earnest fort, *Love not the*
world, nor those things which are in the world? if we
 may neither love it, nor so much as conform our selves
 to it, under so great pains as of the enmity of God, and
 of our eternal damnation, which are before rehearsed, what
 will become of those men that do not only conform
 to it, and to the vanities thereof, but also follow it, love
 it, and bestow all their labours and pains upon it!

Why
 Christ
 hates the
 world.

If you ask me the cause why *Christ* so hates and ab-
 hors this world, *St. John* tells you, because, *The whole*
world is set in wickedness; which is a spirit quite con-
1 John 5. trary to the spirit of *Christ*, as has been shew'd. Which
 spirit leads to pride, vain-glory, ambition, envy, re-
 venge, malice, with pleasures of the flesh, and all
 kind of vanities. As *Christ* on the contrary persuades
 to

to humility, meekness, pardoning of enemies, abstinence, chastity, sufferance, mortification, bearing the cross, with contempt of all earthly pleasures for the kingdom of heaven. Christ hates the world, because it persecutes the good, and advances the bad ; because it roots out virtue, and plants vice : and finally, because it shuts the doors against Christ when he knocks, and strangles the heart that once it possesses, as before has been shew'd.

Wherefore to conclude this part, seeing this world is such a thing as it is ; so vain, so deceitful, so troublesome, so dangerous ; seeing it is a profess'd enemy of Christ, excommunicated and damn'd to the pit of hell ; seeing it is, as a father says, an ark of labour, a school of vanities, a market of deceit, a labyrinth of error ; seeing it is nothing else but a barren wilderness, a stony field, a dirty sty, a tempestuous sea ; seeing it is a grove full of thorns, a meadow full of scorpions, a flourishing garden without fruit ; a cave full of poison'd and deadly basilisks ; seeing it is as I have shew'd, a fountain of miseries, a river of tears, a feign'd fable, a delectable frenzy : seeing as *St. Augustine* says, the joy of this world has nothing else but false delight, true asperity, certain sorrow, uncertain pleasure, troublesome labour, fearful rest, grievous misery, vain hope of felicity ; seeing it has nothing in it, as *St. Chrysostom* says, but tears, shame, repentance, reproach, madness, negligences, labours, terrors, sickness, sin, and death it self ; seeing the world's repose is full of anguish, its security without foundation, its fear without cause, its labour without fruit, its sorrow without profit, its desires without success, its hopes without reward, its mirth without continuance, its miseries without remedies : seeing these, and a thousand evils more are in it, and no one good thing can be had from it, who will be deceived with this vizard, or allured with this vanity hereafter ? who will be so withdrawn from the noble service of God, by the love of so fond a trifle as is this

A description of the world.

Augu. Ep.
39.

Chrysost.
hom. 21.
ad pop.
Antioch.

world? And this to reasonable men may be enough to declare the insufficiency of this impediment.

S E C T. VI.

How we may avoid the evils of the World.

BUT yet now, to comply with the promise I made in the beginning of this chapter, I have a word or two; to add in this place, thereby to shew how we may avoid the foresaid dangers of this world, as also, use it to our gain and advantage. And for the first; to avoid the dangers, seeing there are so many snares and traps, as has been declared; there is no other way, but only to use the refuge of birds in avoiding the dangerous snares of fowlers; that is, to mount up into the air, and so fly over them all: the wise man says: *A net is cast in vain, before the eyes of them that have wings.* The spies of *Jericho*, tho' many snares were laid for them by their enemies, yet they all escaped, for they walked by hills, says the Scripture. Which place *Origine* expounding, says, that there is no way to avoid the dangers of this world, but to walk upon hills, and to imitate *David*, that said, *I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me.* And then we shall say with the same *David*, *Our soul, as a sparrow, is deliver'd from the snares of the fowler.* We must say with *St. Paul*, *Our conversation is in heaven;* and then we shall little fear all these deceits and dangers upon earth. For as the fowler has no hope to catch the bird, except he can by some means allure it to pitch, and come down; so has the devil no way to intangle us but by saying, as he did to *Christ*, *cast thy self down*; that is, fall upon the baits which I have laid, and devour them, enamour thy self with them, tie thy appetite to them, and the like.

He that will avoid, these gross and open temptation, by contemning the allurements of these baits, by flying
over

Psal. 1.

*Hom. 1.
in Josh.*

Psal. 120.

Psal. 123.

Phil. 3.

Mat. 4.

over them, by placing his love and thoughts in the mountains of heavenly joys and eternity, will easily escape all dangers. King *David* was past them all when he said to God, *What is to me in heaven, and besides thee, what would I upon the earth? my flesh has fainted, my heart, God of my heart, and my portion, God for ever.* St. *Paul* was also past these dangers when he said, That now he was crucified to the world, and the world to him: and that he esteem'd all wealth of this world as meer dung: and that altho' he lived in flesh, yet he lived not according to the flesh. Which glorious example, if we would follow, in contemning and despising the vanities of this world, and fixing our minds on the noble riches of God's eternal kingdom to come; the snares of the devil would prevail nothing at all against us in this life.

Psal. 72.

Gal. 6.

Phil. 1.

1 Cor. 10.

Touching the second point, how to use the riches and conveniencies of this world to our advantage, Christ has laid down plainly the means: *Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity.* The rich glutton might have escaped his torments, and have made himself a happy man, by help of worldly wealth, if he had pleased. And so might many a thousand that now live in christianity, and will go to hell for the same cause that the glutton did. Oh that men would take warning one by another, and be wise while they have time! St. *Paul* cries out, *He that sows sparingly, sparingly also shall reap: and he that sows in blessings, of blessings also shall reap.* What a plentiful harvest then might rich men provide for themselves, if they would; having such store of seed lying by them, and so much ground offer'd them daily to sow it in? why do they not remember that sweet harvest-song, *Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you --- for I was hungry, and you gave me meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink, &c.* Or if they do not care for this, why do they not fear at least the terrible sentence that will be spoke against them for not doing those

How to use worldly wealth to our advantage.
Luke 16.

2 Cor. 9.

Mat. 25.

works of mercy. *Go now, you rich men, weep howling in your miseries, which shall come to you.*

John Damascen.
in St. Basil.
Ep. 104.
plat. c. 12.
A parable.

The holy father St. *John Damascen* reports an excellent parable of *Barlaam* the hermit, to our purpose. "There was, says he, a certain city, or commonwealth, which used to chuse to themselves a king from among the poorest sort of people, and to advance him to great honour, wealth, and pleasures for a time; but after a while, when they were weary of him, their custom was to rise against him, and to despoil him of all his felicity, yea, of the very cloaths off his back, and so banish him naked into a desolate island far off, where bringing nothing with him, he should live in great misery, and be put to exceeding slavery for ever. Which practice one king, at a certain time considering, by good advice (for all the others, tho' they knew that custom, yet through negligence and pleasures of their present felicity, thought not of it, till it was too late) took a resolution with himself, to prevent this misery; which was by this means. He saved every day great sums of money from his superfluities and idle expences; and so secretly made over before-hand a great treasure into that island where he was daily in danger to be sent. And when the time came that indeed they deposed him from his kingdom, and turn'd him away naked, as they had done the others before; he went with joy and confidence to the island, where his treasure lay, and was received there with exceeding great triumph, and placed presently in greater glory than ever he was before."

The application of this parable

This parable teaches us as much as possibly can be said in this point. For this city or commonwealth, is this present world, which advances poor men to authority, that is, such as come naked into this life; and upon the sudden, when they least expect it, pulls them down again, and turns them off naked into their graves, and so into another world; where, bringing no treasure of

of good works with them, they are like to find little favour, but rather eternal misery. The wise king that prevented this calamity, is he who in time of wealth during this life (according to the counsel of our Saviour Christ) seeks to lay up a treasure in heaven by alms-deeds and other good works, against the day of *Luke 12.* his death, when he must be banish'd hence naked, as all the princes of that city were. At which time, if their good deeds do follow them, then, as God pro- *Apoc. 14.* mises, they will be happy, and placed in much more glory than ever this world was able to give them. But if they come without oil in their lamps, then there is nothing for them to expect, but *I know you not.* *Mat. 25.* And when they come to be known, or rather discover'd, then follows, *Get ye away from me you cursed into everlasting fire*; which is the last and worst sentence of all. Our Lord defend us from it.

C H A P. V.

Examples of true resolution, in the two former points; suffering for CHRIST, and condemning the world. For the better confirmation of the two foregoing chapters.

WHEREAS the two precedent chapters, of condemning the world, and suffering for Christ, are of their own nature, and man's unwillingness to suffer, very dreadful and loathsome to flesh and blood, so that divers persons, who otherwise esteem themselves no bad Christians, do conceive a horror and aversion even at the very name and mention of such things, persuading themselves that the necessity of Christian profession requires not any resolution to so high a perfection: I am moved in this place to adjoin to the former treatise, a brief declaration of the practice and exercise

The reason
of this
chapter.

exercife of ancient Christians in thefe two points, whereby their opinions and cenfures may better be feen, than by their words ; and wherein each Christian that lives at this day, may behold, as in a table or glafs, what becomes him to do, when occafion is offer'd, if he profeffs to ferve under the fame banner, and to expect his pay at the hands of the fame King and Mafter, as they did.

What has
been hand-
led before.

Many things have been faid before, concerning thefe two points of the contempt of the world, and fuf-
ferance in tribulation. And among other matters, it has been declared, that the very foundation of Christian religion, which is the holy Crofs, ftands principally upon thefe two pillars. It has been fhew'd how Chrift our Saviour, when he fent forth his Apoftles and Dif-
ciples, as the firft fpiritual fathers and mafters of the world, inftructed them, efpecially in this doctrine, as moft convenient and neceffary for the end which he pre-
tends. And for that his divine wifdom did eafily fore-
fee, that deeds have much more force to perfuade than words, he fet forth this doctrine moft exactly in the example of his own life, making the fame a pattern of contemning the world, and of fuffering for juftice ; as alfo did his Apoftles and Difciples after him, to the true and perfect imitation of their Mafter.

The firm
refolution
of the A-
poftles.

Thus much then has been treated before, and many particulars have been declared, as well of the holy Apoftles great fufferings in all kind and manners of affliction, as alfo of their utter defpifing whatfoever was precious or pleafant in this world, for the perfect ferving of their Lord and Mafter. No allurements of this life could entice them, no dignities delight them, no flattery deceive them, no pleafure pervert them, no labours weary them, no difficulty ftop them, no terror or tyranny of mortal men could frighten them from their courfe begun, as long as their fouls remain'd within their bodies. Some of them ended their lives by the fword, fome upon the Crofs, others were ftoned
and

and thrown down from high pinacles, others were scorch'd and skinn'd alive; and all this to serve perfectly their Master, and to stir us up to follow their example. Which thing the learned and devout father, *St. John Chrysostom* considering, when he treated of the deeds of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* in particular, breaks forth into this following speech.

“ O holy and blessed Apostles of my Saviour, what thanks shall we yield unto you, for all the labours, and toils that you have taken for us? when I think of thee, O *Peter*, I fall into admiration; and when I remember thee O *Paul*, I fall besides my self, and am oppress'd with tears. For what shall I say, or what shall I think, when I behold the afflictions that you have suffer'd? how many prisons have you two sanctified? how many chains have you adorn'd? how many torments have you sustain'd? how many reproaches have you received? O blessed be those tongues of yours, that have been such instruments of the Holy Ghost; and blessed be your members imbrued with blood, for the love of Christ's Church. You have truly follow'd your Master in all things, &c. Rejoice therefore, thou *Peter*, to whom it was given, to die upon the Cross, thereby to imitate our Saviour; and triumph, thou *Paul*, whose head was cut off with the sword, for the same cause. O this sword shall be to me instead of a crown; and the nails wherewith *St. Peter* was crucified, shall be most precious stones in my diadem.” Thus much, and many things more this holy father utters, with great fervour in admiration of the sufferings of these blessed Apostles, whose labours how much he endeavour'd to put in execution in his own life, and how far he was made partaker of like afflictions, may appear to him that will read the ecclesiastical history, which declares how he both lived and died in continual tribulation.

O dear Christian, if we had as tender hearts in contemplation of these affairs, as this holy man of God had,

The
speech of
St. Chry-
soptom,
Serm. 32.
in moral
exhortation

Vid. hist.
Sacrat.
lib. 6.

Egesib. l.
5. hist.
apud. Euf.
l. 2. c. 22.
Of
St. James.

had, we should be of another judgment in many things, than we are. We see *St. Chrysostom* was thus moved with the consideration of these two Apostles sufferings. But how much might be said of all the rest in like manner? It is written by *Egesippus*, that lived immediately after the time of *St. James*, who was call'd the brother of *JESUS*, and was left by him as the first bishop of *Jerusalem*, that he being in singular authority and credit for his holiness and wisdom, not only among all Christians, but also among the whole nation of the *Jews* (for which he was call'd by the name of *James the Just*, as *Josephus the Jew* reports) yet he chose a most austere and sharp kind of life, never tasting either wine or flesh, or anointing his body with oil, according to the custom of the country. He was so diligent and constant in continually praying upon his knees, that the skin thereof was as hard as the brawn of a camel's knee. And being brought forth one day, and placed upon a pinnacle of the temple of *Jerusalem*, in the presence of infinite people (for that it was on the high feast of *Easter*) and there entreated by all the nobles and magistrates of *Jury* to speak some word to derogate from Christian religion, with promise of infinite honour, if he would comply with their request: he chose rather to be reviled and stoned by the people, to be thrown down from the pinnacle where he stood, and to have his head cleft in sunder with a staff, or instrument that dyers use, rather than to relent in professing that thing which he knew to be true; and so happily ended this life, in the year of Christ 63.

Such was the account that these men made of worldly dignities and promotions, when they brought with them any hindrance to God's perfect service. And such was the ready desire they had to suffer, for their Master's honour, on every occasion that was offer'd. O gentle reader, consider what our Saviour *JESUS* said of these men: *You are they that have remain'd with me in my temptations, and I dispose to you, as my*
Father

Luke 12.

Father disposed to me, a kingdom! how truly on the contrary may be verified of us, that which the same Saviour says in another place: *In time of tribulation* Luke 18. *they revolt*: that is, whensoever tribulation falls upon them, they abandon Christ.

But let us see now further, how those who follow'd and lived after the Apostles, behaved themselves in this behalf. For the better conceiving whereof, you must remember, that for the space of three hundred years together, after Christ's departure out of this world, he sent almost continual temptations; that is to say, continual tribulations, afflictions and persecutions to his Church upon earth (except only certain short times of breathing) wherein he meant to make evident proof of his servants patience, and of his own power against his enemies. And whereas a little before his departure he forewarn'd his Disciples of these things to come, assuring them, *That he sent them as sheep in the midst of wolves*: he perform'd the same not long after, in such sort that it may seem he had broke open all the gates and bars of hell at once, and turn'd out all the legions of furies, as most ravenous bears and lions, upon these his tender innocent lambs. For in ten general and most dreadful persecutions which in this time of the first three hundred years, by publick authority and commandment were exercised; it is impossible for man to recount either the tyranny and iniquity of the laws, or the barbarous cruelty of the executors, or the strange inventions of tormentors. And altho' in these times of trial, as it always falls out, there were divers Christians, who, as *Eusebius* who writes the history well notes, for the love of the world, and of their own ease, suffer'd shipwreck of their salvation; yet those also were without number, who by contempt of the world, did bear out the storm, and persevered faithful. Of whom, some few shall be noted in this following discourse, for our instruction and comfort in like occurrences.

After

The manifold temptations of the primitive Church.

Mat. 10.

Euseb. l. 2. hist. cap. 2.

After the death of *St. James* before mention'd, and the destruction of *Jerusalem*, which *Josephus* the Jew was of opinion to have been hasten'd by God for the punishment of that murder, *Egesippus* and *Eusebius*, report, that as many of the Apostles and Disciples of Christ, as were then alive, gather'd themselves together, and ordain'd bishop of *Jerusalem*, in place of *St. James*, one *Simeon*, the son of *Cleophas*; which *Cleophas*, *St. Luke* names for one of the two Disciples that went to *Emaus* together, and talk'd with Christ upon the way, after his resurrection. *St. Matthew* also and *St. Luke*, do make mention of *Mary*, the wife of *Cleophas*, who was continually in company of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of our Saviour, at his Passion: which *Mary* being Mother to this *Simeon*, and her husband *Cleophas* being brother to *St. Joseph*, as *Egesippus* holds, *Simeon* was accounted as a cousin-german to our Saviour *JESUS*, and by all probability, had both seen him and heard him in his life-time. This holy man then having lived very long in this his charge of bishoprick, and being now a hundred and twenty years old, was in the time of the emperor *Trajan* (*St. John* the evangelist being dead a little before) accused by certain hereticks: who then first (as *Egesippus* says, who lived in the same time) began to shew themselves openly in the world, because all the holy Apostles and others, who had heard our Saviour speak, were dead, and therefore these hereticks devised now what new opinions and expositions upon Scriptures pleased them best. And because this man was the chief pillar that stood against them in defence of the Catholick Faith, and apostolical tradition at that day, they caused him cunningly to be apprehended and presented before *Atticus*, then governor of *Jury* for the emperor. Who after many allurements and threats used with him, when by no means he could move him to relent from his constancy in Christ's service; he gave sentence to have him beaten with whips, and to be tormented many days together:

Joseph.
apud Euse.
l. 1. c. 22.
& l. 3.
c. 10. & 26
Luke 24.

Mat. 27.
John 19.

St. Simeon's
mar-
tyrdom.

Egesip.
apud Euse.
l. 5. c. 26.

The pub-
lick begin-
ning of he-
reticks.

together : at which the old man shrunk not, but endured with most wonderful courage, insomuch that *Atticus* being astonish'd, says our author, that one of sixscore years of age could bear so many torments, commanded him finally to be nailed on a Cross, as his Master Christ was, and so he died most resolutely for his sake. Neither did he allege his old age or weakness, for any excuse not to suffer for his Master.

At the very same time there lived in *Asia*, a man renowned for his holiness, call'd *Ignatius*, a Disciple to the Apostles, and by them ordain'd bishop of *Antioch*, after that *Peter* had left the same. This man being accused for his faith to the governor of *Syria*, and standing constant in the confession thereof, was condemn'd by him to be torn in pieces by wild beasts. But because he was a person of great note, he was sent prisoner to *Rome* under the custody of ten soldiers to suffer there. And altho' the soldiers upon the way used him very rudely, and kept him strait, yet he found means either by speech or letters, to comfort all the Christians as he pass'd by them ; but especially, as *Eusebius* notes, he inculcated two points to be remember'd by them : “ First, that they should, above all
 “ other things, take heed of new opinions and heresies,
 “ which then first began to creep abroad : and second-
 “ ly, that they should stick and cleave most firmly to
 “ the tradition of the Apostles, ” for the true understanding and interpretation of Scripture. That is to say, they should admit no other interpretation but that which all Churches by general and uniform consent had received from the Apostles ; insinuating hereby, that this should be an infallible rule to guide men by, to the world's end.

The history of St. Ignatius.

Euseb. l. 3. c. 30.

Ignatius's rule to discern truth.

Besides this, the good man got time also and opportunity in this journey, to write divers epistles to sundry Churches, which *Eusebius* in his history sets down. And among other things, either he being inform'd, or fearing of himself, that the Christians in *Rome* hear-
 ing

ing of his coming, would use means, with the emperor to save his life, and by that means deprive him of martyrdom: he writ them a most earnest letter, beseeching them not to do so. Out of which letter, both *Eusebius* and *St. Hierom* cite these most excellent words following. “ In this my journey, says he, from
 “ *Syria* to *Rome*, I am forced to fight day and night
 “ with ten leopards, that is to say, with ten soldiers
 “ sent to keep me, who the more benefits I bestow
 “ upon them, the worse and the more cruel they are
 “ towards me. But their iniquity is my instruction,
 “ and yet hereby I am not justified. Would to God
 “ I were once come to enjoy those beasts that are
 “ appointed to devour me. I greatly desire that it
 “ may be shortly, and that they may be stirr’d up to eat
 “ me quickly, lest perhaps they abstain from touching
 “ me, as they have done from the bodies of other
 “ martyrs. But if they should refuse to set upon me,
 “ I will entice them on my self. Pardon me, my
 “ children, for I know what is good for me. Now I
 “ begin to be *CHRIST*’s true Disciple, desiring
 “ nothing that is seen in this world with man’s eyes,
 “ but only *JESUS CHRIST*, my Saviour. Fire,
 “ cross, beasts, breaking of my bones, quartering of
 “ my members, tearing and renting of my body, and
 “ all the other torments that the devil can invent, let
 “ them all come upon me, only that I may enjoy my
 “ *JESUS*. ”

Euseb. l. 3.
c. 30.
Hier. in
catal.
Scrip.

The
 zealous
 words of
St. Ignatius
 at his
 death.

Iren. l. 5.
c. 28.
Hier. in
Catal.

Thus far does *Eusebius* cite the words of *St. Ignatius* epistle, which is yet extant. *St. Irenæus* and *St. Hierom*, do add yet further, that when he came to suffer, and heard the roarings of the lions ready to come out upon him, he used these words: “ I am *God*’s wheat, and
 “ the teeth of these wild beasts must grind me, to the
 “ end I may be pure and good bread for *Christ*’s table.” He suffer’d, says *St. Hierom*, in the eleventh year of *Trajan*’s reign, and upon the year of *Christ* 110, and his relicks were carried back again by *Christians* from *Rome*

St. Ignatius’s
 Re-
 licks.

to *Antioch*, and there are kept without the gate call'd *Daphnitica*.

Here we see the fervour of this servant of God ; we see his constancy, his courage, his comfort in suffering. And how came he, dear brother, to this most happy and blessed state ? we hear him say of himself, “ That “ now he begun to be *CHRIST*’s true Disciple, “ when he desired nothing that man’s eye can behold, “ but only his Lord and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*.” This burning love then of Jesus, did consume in him all other love and affection that hinders worldly men from the like resolution. He was no friend or lover of the world. Hear the saying of another light of God’s Church, who lived at the very same time, and suffer’d soon after him for the same cause, and spoke with him in his journey towards *Rome* ; I mean *St. Polycarp*, who writ thus of *Ignatius*, to the *Philippenses*, presently after his martyrdom. “ I beseech you, brethren, to yield “ all obedience where it is due, and to use all patience “ in your afflictions, according to the example which “ you have seen in *Ignatius*, and other martyrs, as also “ in *St. Paul*, and the rest of the Apostles, assuring “ your selves that these men ran not in vain, but in “ faith and justice, and therefore are gone to the place “ which was due to them, being now with their Lord, “ of whose afflictions they were made partakers in this “ life. They were not lovers of this world, but they “ loved their Master, who suffer’d death for our love, “ and rose again for our glorification.” Thus far *St. Polycarp*.

How primitive Christians came to their constancy.

And since we have made mention of this rare and worthy man *Polycarp* ; who altho’ he saw not Christ himself in flesh, yet he lived most familiarly with divers of the Apostles, and especially with *St. John* Evangelist, whose domestical Disciple he was many years, and by him made bishop of the Church of *Smirna* in *Asia*. And because his sight and martyrdom for Christian Religion, follow’d not long after the death of *Ignatius*,

The History of *St. Polycarp*.

*Euseb. l. 1.
c. 13. &
14.*

Dangerous
for any
man to of-
fer himself
to persecu-
tion.

it is not amiss to speak of him also in this place. The narration is set down at large by *Eusebius* and others, out of an epistle written by Christians of the Church of *Smyrna*, who were all present at the whole tragedy of his death. The sum whereof, is this: that whereas on a certain day, by the command of the emperor *Antoninus*, incredible and innumerable torments were used against Christians in the city of *Smyrna*, divers did bear the same with invincible courage, to the singular comfort of their brethren, and to the great admiration of their enemies; altho' one *Quintus* that was newly come out of *Phrygia*, and had rashly offer'd himself to the tortures, before he was sought for, fell shamefully the same day, and denied his profession of Christian religion.

Polycarp then, while these things were doing, remain'd secretly in a house with other Christians, whither every thing that past was brought to him by the brethren, as soon as it was done; and at length news came that *Polycarp* himself was sought for. Whereat he nothing moved, answer'd with a quiet mind and countenance, That he was ready: meaning indeed to expect the officers there till they came for him. But the Christians that were present with him, forced him, whether he would or no, to retire himself to a little village not far off, where he made his abode for some days, while he was sought for in the city. During which time he did nothing else, but pray day and night; and that especially for the peace and unity of the Church, because heresies began now to swarm publickly. He had a vision also, which he told to those that were there present with him, signifying that he must go to Christ by fire. At length, the pursuers that had sought all about the city, came by God's permission, to the village where he was, and thereupon he fled by night to another, whither they also follow'd him. And there finding two children in the street, forced one of them by beating, to discover the house wherein he lay.

St. *Polycarp's*
greatest
care for the
Church's
unity.

Coming

Coming therefore into the house, and understanding that he was in a chamber above, they sent for him to come down: and altho' the messenger favouring *Poly-carp*, shew'd him a way how to escape by another house, yet he refused it, saying, *We have fled enough, let God's will be done.* And so coming down with a chearful countenance, he bid them heartily welcome, and commanded the meat left in the house to be set before them, beseeching them only to give him one hour's space, wherein to pray to his Lord, before he departed. Which they willingly granted, being much moved with his grey hairs and fatherly countenance; as also cast into admiration with the fervour of his prayers that he made there by himself, whilst they were eating. Which being ended, they took him out, placing him upon an ass, and so led him to the city of *Smyrna*, very early in the morning, upon the great *Sabbath-day*, having advertised the magistrates before of their coming, who for that cause were gather'd together with all the people in the market-place.

St. *Poly-carp* apprehended.

And to make the matter more solemn, they sent forth from the city one *Herod*, that was provost of the peace, to meet him and fetch him in. He therefore coming forth with great pomp in his charr, met with *Poly-carp*, and first saluted him with great honour and reverence, desiring him to come down from the ass, and to sit with him in his charr, and there began to flatter him, saying, You are a grave and wise man; have respect for your self. What great matter is it to say, Lord *Cæsar*; or to make a sacrifice? but *Poly-carp* held his peace; and when the other went forward using many words to that purpose, *Poly-carp* answer'd: *Sir, in fine, I am not to follow your counsel.* At which words, he conceiving great disdain, thrust him headlong out of his charr, and with such violence, that he very much wounded his leg in falling. But the old man making no account thereof, follow'd chearfully the soldiers who led him.

St. *Poly-carp's* carriage to *Smyrna.*

The manner of persecutors speeches.

St Polycarp's confession before the multitude. *Eus. l. 4. c. 13 & 14.*

And when he came to the place where the judges were, he enter'd in with a chearful countenance, and much the more, because at the very instant when he enter'd, there was a clear and loud voice heard from heaven, saying, *Be of good courage Polycarp, and behave thy self valliantly.* When he came before the high magistrate, call'd the proconsul, first, there was an infinite outcry of the people against him; which being appeased, the proconsul ask'd him, whether he was *Polycarp*; where-to he answer'd, yes, I am *Polycarp*. Then the proconsul said, have regard to thy old age, father, repent and say with us, *Let impious men be destroy'd*: by which terms were understood Christians, that refused to adore or sacrifice to their gods. Whereat St. *Polycarp* turning himself to the multitude, and lifting up his hands to heaven, with a deep sigh said; O Lord, destroy and take away the wicked, meaning in a contrary sense to them; then the proconsul said, swear also by *Cæsar's* fortune, and deny Christ. Whereunto *Polycarp* answer'd, I have served Christ now fourscore and six years, and he never did me any hurt, but much good, how then can I deny my Lord and King, that hitherto has dealt so mercifully with me? then the proconsul again urged, that he should swear by *Cæsar's* fortune. Where-to the other replied, if thou namest *Cæsar's* good fortune so often for ostentation-sake, know that I am a Christian, who have nothing to do with fortune; and if you please to learn what Christian profession is, appoint a day, and I will teach thee. Persuade this people, said the proconsul, to be content with that. No, said *Polycarp*, I esteem them not worthy to be dealt withal in such a matter; but to thee as a magistrate, our profession teaches us to have respect and reverence, so far forth, as it may stand with the safety of our soul, and without prejudice of our religion. So he.

After this, there pass'd divers other speeches between them, the one threatning torments, beasts, fire, and sword; and the other shewing all desire, and readiness to

to sustain the same. The people cried out continually that he might be torn in pieces by wild beasts. But that was denied, because the beasts were wearied out upon other martyrs before. Then they cried out, that he might be burnt alive; which *Polycarp* hearing, and remembring the vision which he had seen in the village before his apprehension, fell down on his knees and pray'd, and soon after rising again, turn'd himself to the people, and said, *Be content, for you shall have your desire, for it is determin'd that I shall be burnt alive:* and a little after, the proconsul gave sentence for his burning.

Unruly behaviour of the multitude.

When he was brought to the fire, he put off his own apparel, but when he came to his shoes, he had some difficulty therein, for want of use, being never permitted by Christians to do that office to himself before, every one thinking it felicity to be the first in doing of that service, wheresoever he came, thereby to touch his holy body. He pray'd vehemently in the fire, and gave immortal thanks to almighty God that he had made him worthy of that day's combat: during which time, the fire divided it self in two parts, and would not touch him, insomuch that the magistrate was constrain'd to send one to run him through with a sword, where-with he died. Thus far repeats *Eusebius* out of the epistle of those men who were present at his martyrdom; and they add further, these words in the same epistle: "That the *Jews* and *Gentiles* there present, did suggest to the magistrate, to take heed, lest we Christians, should steal away his body, and so begin to honour him instead of our crucified God. Upon which suggestion, his body, by command, was burnt there in our presence after it was dead, but yet we afterwards gather'd up his bones out of the ashes, and laid them up as things more precious than gold, or precious stones, in a place convenient for such a treasure, hoping that one day God will permit us to come together in peace, and to celebrate the festival

The martyrdom of St. *Polycarp*. *Euseb. l. 4. c. 4.*

Euseb. l. 4. c. 4. & Nicoph. l. 3. c. 35.

St. *Polycarp's* relicts.

“ day of this his holy martyrdom.” Thus they. His martyrdom happen’d in the year of Christ 169.

To be not-
ed in St.
Polycarp.

Iren. l. 8.
c. 3. *apud.*
Euseb. l. 4
c. 13.

Iren. his
testimony
of St. *Polycarp*’s
doctrine.

I have been the longer in setting down the combat and end of this glorious Saint, because he was a most rare and singular man; and his example may serve us for our instruction to divers purposes; but especially, how we ought to be firm and constant, in holding, the general uniform doctrine, and interpretation of Scriptures, deliver’d by tradition from the Apostles in the Catholick Church, with detestation of all new opinions: as also St. *Ignatius* warn’d before. The holy bishop and martyr of God *Irenaeus*, that lived in his time, and went from *Lyons* in *France* into *Asia*, to see and hear him, reported certain things of this blessed man, which I cannot in this place omit, because they may greatly profit such men in these our days, as have grace to be moved or help’d with any thing.

“ *Polycarp*, says he, was not only instructed by the
“ Apostles themselves, but also by them made bishop
“ of the city of *Smyrna*. He lived familiarly with
“ many that had seen and spoken with our Saviour in
“ flesh, and we in our youth saw him in *Asia*, for he
“ lived long, and ended his life by a most famous
“ martyrdom. He always taught those things which
“ he had learn’d of the Apostles, and which the
“ Church delivers, and which are only true. Which
“ may be proved by the consent of all the churches of
“ *Asia*, and by the bishops who have succeeded after
“ him. He was a more faithful witness of the truth,
“ than *Valentius* or *Marcion*, or all the body of other
“ hereticks together, who have brought pestilent new
“ sects into the Church. He went to *Rome*, *Anicetus*
“ being then bishop, and reduced to the Church and
“ true religion divers that were perverted by the fore-
“ said hereticks: and protested openly, that he had
“ received from the Apostles themselves, that only and
“ sole truth, which is delivered from the Catholick
“ Church. There are yet alive that have heard him
“ tell,

St. *John*’s
hatred a-
gainst here-
ticks.

“ tell, how *St. John* the Apostle of our Saviour, be-
 “ ing once at *Ephesus* going into a common bath, and
 “ seeing *Cerintbus* the heretick therein, ran out again
 “ in haste, saying to them that were with him, Let us
 “ flie from hence, lest the bath in which the enemy
 “ of God *Cerintbus* remains, fall down and destroy
 “ us. The same *Polycarp*, at the time when he was at
 “ *Rome*, meeting by chance with *Marcion* the heretick,
 “ and being demanded of him whether he knew him
 “ not, answer’d, Yes, I know thee for the eldest child of
 “ sathan. So cautious were the Apostles, and their scho-
 “ lars, not so much as to talk with such fellows, as en-
 “ deavour’d by their new commentaries, and expositi-
 “ ons of Scripture, to change the truth before received.
 “ And so *St. Paul* warn’d us all to do, when he said,
 “ Avoid an heretical man, after one or two admoniti-
 “ ons, assuring thy self, that such a one is perverse
 “ and sins, being condemn’d by his own proper judg-
 “ ment.” Hitherto are the words of holy *Irenæus*.

Tit. 3.

The same *Irenæus* writing to one *Florinus* his old
 acquaintance in the school of *St. Polycarp*, and now
 beginning to be a heretick in *Rome*, speak as follows.
 “ These opinions of thine, O *Florinus*, to speak friend-
 “ ly, are not true, nor wholsom: these opinions are re-
 “ pugnant to the Church. These opinions thou re-
 “ ceivedst not by tradition from the priests, that be-
 “ fore us were scholars to the Apostles. I did see thee
 “ when I was but a child, with *Polycarp* in *Asia*; at that
 “ time thou, living very pompously at the emperor’s
 “ court, didst endeavour to maintain thy self in a good
 “ opinion with *Polycarp*. I remember those times,
 “ well, and they stick in my mind more firmly than
 “ other things that pass’d since. Inasmuch, that I can
 “ tell at this time, the very place wherein the blessed
 “ man did sit when he spoke to us. I can tell the or-
 “ der and manner of his coming in, the form and
 “ method of his life, the shape of his body, the man-
 “ ner of his preaching to the multitude. I remember,

*Iren. ep.
 ad. Flor.
 & Euseb.
 l. 5. c. 9.*

*The doings
 and sayings
 of St. Po-
 lycarp.*

“ how he was wont to recount unto us, the familiar con-
 “ versation he had with St. *John* the Evangelist, and with
 “ divers others who had seen our Saviour. I remember
 “ how he would tell us their speeches, and what he had
 “ heard them say of Christ, of his miracles, virtues,
 “ and doctrine, which they had seen with their own eyes,
 “ and heard with their ears; which were all agreeing
 “ with the Scriptures that now we have. These things
 “ through the great mercy of God towards me, I
 “ heard at that time, both diligently and attentively;
 “ not so much committing them to ink and paper,
 “ as to the inward cogitation of my mind. And while
 “ I live, I do, and shall, by God’s holy grace, most
 “ carefully renew the memory thereof. And now here
 “ before almighty God, I may truly protest, that if
 “ this holy and apostolical priest *Polycarp*, should
 “ have heard of such new opinions, as you defend, he
 “ would have stopped his ears, and cried out, as his
 “ custom was, O good God! to what miserable times
 “ hast thou reserved me, to hear these things! and pre-
 “ sently would have risen and run out of the place,
 “ where he had been standing or sitting, when such
 “ doctrine should have been utter’d.” Hitherto *Irenæus*.

A note
 upon the
 premises
 touching
 the danger
 of new
 opinions.

And now, dear Christian, who would not be moved
 with the grave and zealous speeches of these reverend
 men, that lived so nigh the times of the holy Apostles,
 and of our Saviour himself? how exceeding great was
 their care amidst all their tribulations, and at the very
 time, when they were to depart out of this world (for
Irenæus soon after suffer’d martyrdom) to forewarn Chri-
 stians to beware of heresy and schism, and to detest all man-
 ner of new opinions, commentaries, and expositions upon
 holy Scripture, different from those which the universal
 succession and tradition of the Church had left to them,
 from the Apostles time? they saw well, and were so
 told by the Apostles themselves, that there was no other
 certain way to understand and hold the truth first plant-
 ed, but to stick to this tradition deliver’d by Christ to
 his

his Church for the understanding of Scriptures, and trial of doctrines: which tradition was, by God's appointment, to pass from hand to hand, from bishop to bishop, from doctor to doctor, from council to council, from church to church, from age to age, to the world's end; and without this, they saw by experience of those first heresies, that every heretick would from time to time, cause disturbance in the Catholick Church, by interpreting the Scriptures and wresting them to his own sense. To the end then, that Christ's Catholick people might stand together firmly in unity of faith, and arm themselves jointly in the contempt of this world and suffering for their Master; these holy men did so carefully exclaim against them, having heard from the Apostles own mouths, how detestable a thing heresy was in the sight of God; and that where-soever it enter'd, there was no more hope of any virtue or other good thing helping to salvation. For which cause it is recorded in like manner, that divers of these first martyrs, being brought forth to die in company of certain hereticks, that offer'd to die also for the defence of Christian religion; they refused to go forth to die in their company, affirming them in truth to be enemies of Jesus Christ, howsoever they made profession to die for him.

The nature
and force
of tradition

*Appolinar.
hier. apud
Niceph.
l. 4. c. 23.*

And be this spoken by the by, concerning these notable mens zeal in detestation of schism and heresy, and of new expositions of holy Scripture, against the tradition of the universal Church, which no man can think to be from our purpose, if he considers the times wherein we live, and how little this tradition is now regarded by many, in respect of their own new tenets and modern inventions. Which tho' they endeavour to maintain by sundry passages out of holy Scripture, often purposely corrupted, always wrested from the true Catholick Sense to their own unwarrantable interpretation: they can never make good, against the unanimity of apostolical tradition which has always persevered in the

the Church of Christ ; by which she has been unerringly guided in that faith on which our religion is so grounded, that the gates of hell will not prevail against it ; and for which so many holy men have joyfully laid down their lives in all ages, from the beginning of the Church.

The martyrdom of
St. *Irenæus*.
215.
An. Dom.
180.

It follows in the foresaid history of *Eusebius*, that St. *Irenæus* in a short time, to wit, in the next age after the Apostles, came also to his combat for the confession of his Master in the city of *Lyons* in *France* ; where after infinite torments and afflictions which he suffer'd, he ended his life the twenty eighth of *June*, under the emperor *Severus*. But before this, he was sent into *Asia*, to the Christians there, from the Christians in *France* that lived in persecution ; and in the way he had letters also to the bishop of *Rome*, *Eleutherius*, in his own commendation. Which letters well declare, what a reverend opinion the Martyrs of God had of him. And the other letters that he carried into *Asia*, set forth the marvelous trial to which our Saviour at that time put his servants ; whereof, I have thought fit to recite some part in this place, for our instruction and for our comfort in adversities that befall us.

The letters
of Christi-
ans suffer-
ing perse-
cution in
France.
Apud Euseb.
l. 5. c. 1.

The letters begin thus : “ The servants of *JESUS CHRIST*, that dwell at *Lyons* and *Vienna* in *France*, send peace in our Lord *JESUS*, to their brethren in *Asia* and *Phrygia*, &c. The greatness of our afflictions which grow upon us in this place, neither can we, nor any man else, express by writing, &c.” And then they shew first how they were forbid by publick edict to enter into any publick house, booth, or market-place, or to come abroad out of their own doors. Secondly, they were fetch'd out by officers from their own houses, led to the market-place, and in the way reviled, spit upon by the people, beaten with clubs and other weapons, which each man had in his hand ; their apparel pull'd off from their backs, and this before judgment was given against them, while yet they expected the coming of the president to determine their

their cause. Who, when he came, demanding no other question of them, but only, whether they were Christians or no; commanded all manner of torments to be exercised upon them. And because a noble young gentleman, named *Vetus*, began to speak a word or two in their behalf, he was also condemn'd among the rest, as advocate of the Christians. Thirdly, they shew that all their friends, acquaintance, and kindred among the *Gentiles* at that time, forsook them. Their own servants, for fear of torments, came in and accused them most falsely of *of eating of * mans flesh*; and that which grieved them most of all, ten of their company, upon the first sight of torments, abjured Christ openly.

And yet notwithstanding all this, they declare that Christ their Saviour forsook them not in their extremities, but comforted them above all measure, by the noble confessions and combats of divers others, whereof they recite very strange examples: namely, of one *Sanctus* a deacon, who for all the torments the enemies could use upon him, from morning to night, could not be forced to answer the present to any one question that he ask'd, but only by those two latin words, *Christianus sum*, I am a Christian. *These two words*, says the narration, *served for answers to whatsoever he was ask'd, either touching himself or others.* The like they write of one *Blandina* a noble woman, who wearied out all her tormentors; and therefore in a rage, towards the end of the day, they tied her to a great beam and hang'd her up in the air: Which beam, because it represented the form of a Cross, as she hang'd upon it, did infinitely comfort both her and other Christians. They declare besides, that their holy old bishop named *Pothenus*, in whose place *Irenaeus* succeeded, being fourscore and ten years old, and not able so much as to stand on his feet, was carried to the place by the hands of soldiers, and there ended his life with incredible fortitude. And of the foresaid *Blandina* they write, that she being put down from the beam again, was

* This was a common accusation against Christians in those days in respect of the blessed sacrament. Which then was held to be Christ's flesh. Wonderful constancy of divers martyrs.

St. Blandina.

beaten

beaten with whips, rent with iron-hooks, set upon a burning frying-pan, and after that, wrapt in a net and cast among wild bulls. In all which torments she kept a merry countenance, thanking God most heartily for this benefit, and for that she had seen her own children die constantly in the same place for the same cause before her.

The courage of *Attalus* the Martyr.

They report also of one *Attalus*, a man of great name and authority in that city, that being drawn forth of his house, he was first led about the theatre, or place of spectacle, with a table borne before him, wherein was written in great latin letters, *This is Attalus the Christian*: and afterwards he was abused by the people in all kind of most extream villanous manners; but yet because of his nobility, the president durst proceed no further against him, till he had writ to *Rome* to the emperor, and received answer, which was soon after (he in the mean time being kept in prison, where he did very much good) and then upon the solemn day of the publick fairs that were in *Lyons*, he was brought forth again, and first put to fight with divers wild beasts, by which he was much torn and tormented, but not slain. And then after all this he was placed in a chair of burning-iron and therein examin'd about his faith. And when the smoke and loathsome stench of his flesh that broil'd, offended them that stood about him, he said to the people, *O brethren this is indeed to devour man's flesh, whereof falsely you accuse us*. And finally, the narration adds, that after these tyrants had wasted their fury in the slaughter of so many Christians, that it was a horror to themselves to behold their bodies and bones; yet they were not satisfied. But first caused the said bodies to be watched in that place for the space of six days together, till they were putrified, to the end that Christians should not steal them away, and then also doubting, lest some of their relicks might be reserved, if they should so abandon them, they burnt all to ashes, and cast the same into the *Rhone*, that runs through the city of *Lyons*.

Great cruelty.

Spite of infidels against relicks.

These

These were the combats whereby almighty God in those days would try his trusty servants ; far exceeding any that he lays upon us in these later times, tho' we complain much more than they did. Hear now another brief description set down by *Dionysius* bishop of *Alexandria*, of the things that he and other Christians suffer'd there in his city, not long after, under *Decius* the emperor. He writes the history to the bishop of *Antioch*, and the same is recorded by *Eusebius*. “ I speak before God, says he, and his divine majesty knows that I speak the truth, &c. The persecution began here against us before the emperor's edict came forth, as it were by a certain prophecy, that shortly it would ensue. First, they began with a certain godly woman named *Quinta*, whom they drew by the heels about the city upon the pavement, and whipp'd her naked, and finally, murder'd her with stones. After that, they came in fury to all our houses, and drew us forth, that is, every man his neighbour, according as either hatred or covetousness to have his goods moved them. For whatsoever was precious in our houses, they took with them, and the rest they cast out into the streets. This lasted for divers months, and many noble martyrs died in this time, as *Appollonia*, *Serapion*, and others ; altho' some that were not worthy of this conflict, made shipwreck of their salvation.

Euseb. l. 6. c. 32, & 33. l. 7. c. 10.

A most cruel persecution in *Alexandria*.

The fall of weaklings.

“ At length the most horrible edict of *Decius* against us was publish'd, and then you might see that dreadful sentence of our Saviour fulfill'd : *That the very elect if it were possible, should be driven to fall.* For first ; of all those that were rich among us, or of any great calling, whereof there were many, some prevented the magistrates, and offer'd themselves voluntarily, as good subjects, to fulfil the emperor's command. Others permitted themselves as unwilling to be drawn by the magistrates, to adore their gods ; others went as allured and constrain'd as it

Mat. 24. The danger of riches in persecution.

Divers sorts of falling.

“ were

“ were, by persuasions of their neighbours, friends,
 “ and kinsfolks; others did it secretly in their own
 “ houses at home: others went with so evil a will, and
 “ with so ill-favour’d a countenance to sacrifice, that
 “ they were laugh’d at by the enemies themselves, be-
 “ cause they had not courage to refuse it, nor yet heart
 “ to do it. Others went to it openly and impudently,
 “ affirming that they had never been Christians in their
 “ lives: to behold which, made us remember that saying of
 “ our Saviour: *How hard it is for a rich man to be saved.*

Mat. 19.

Poor men
 follow ea-
 sily the ex-
 ample of
 the rich.

“ Many of the poorer sort follow’d the examples of
 “ rich men: some were taken and carried to prison,
 “ and after divers days were induced to forswear
 “ *CHRIST*. Others come out and began to suffer
 “ torments, but presently fainted and denied their faith.
 “ But afterwards ensued the glorious spectacle of the
 “ chosen martyrs; whereof the first was old *Julian*,
 “ that could not move by reason of the gout; yet be-
 “ ing set upon a camel, and whipp’d naked through
 “ all the streets of *Alexandria*, which was very large,
 “ was afterwards burnt alive. After him follow’d *Cbro*
 “ *nicon*, *Macare*, *Alexander*, *Heron*, *Dioscorus*, *Am-*
 “ *mon*, *Zeno*, *Ptolomeus*, *Ingenes*, *Mercuria*, *Dionysia*,
 “ and others. And the said *Dioscorus*, because he was but
 “ yet a child, after a certain time, was let go by the
 “ president, hoping that he might be corrupted. But
 “ he is here with me very constant, and most ready to
 “ sustain a greater conflict, when God will call him to it.”

Constant
 Martyrs.

The zeal
 of *Diony-*
sus in his
 persecu-
 tion, a-
 gainst
 schism and
 heresies.

Thus writ this blessed man of God; adjoining
 many things of his own examinations and sufferings,
 which for brevity sake I omit: only I cannot let pass
 that rare zeal which he shew’d amidst all these afflictions,
 against schismatics and heretics; as may appear
 by those words of his, which he writes in an epistle to
Novatus, when he by new inventions began to trouble
 the Church of *Rome*. The words are recorded by

Euseb. l. 6. cap. 37. *Eusebius*, and are these which follow. “ It should
 “ have been thy duty, O *Novatus*, says he, to have
 “ suffer’d

“ suffer’d all inconveniencies in the world, rather than
 “ to have broken the concord of God’s Church. And truly, that martyrdom which is suffer’d for the defence of the consent of the unity of *CHRIST*’s Church, is no less, but rather much more commendable, in my opinion, than that which is suffer’d for not sacrificing to idols. For in the latter, a man suffers martyrdom for saving his own soul; but in the former, he suffers for saving the whole Church.”
 Thus far *Dionysius*.

Martyrdom at hereticks hands more commendable than at infidels.

At the very same time, with this holy man, tho’ somewhat younger, lived the famous prelate and martyr of God, *St. Cyprian*; who (as by his own writings appears, and is recorded by *Pontius* his deacon that lived with him, and by *St. Hierom*, *St. Augustine*, and others that follow’d him) not only made many martyrs in his time by his exhortations, and by his example in suffering: but also concluded his own life with a most famous martyrdom, sustain’d with all alacrity for his Master’s sake. He writ a book, an exhortation to martyrdom, and another of the good that Christians get by sufferings; besides many epistles to the same effect and purpose, especially to such as were in prisons, mines, banishment and persecution. In which writings he sets out most directly the dignity of suffering for justice and religion. In the end when the time drew near in which he himself was to suffer, the edict of the emperor *Valerian* against Christians being publish’d in *Rome*, in the year of Christ 260, whilst *St. Cyprian* was in banishment near *Carthage*, he having received news thereof, by some that he had sent for that purpose to *Rome*, advertised one *Succellus* a bishop, of the whole matter, and by him the rest of the brethren in *Africa*, in these words: “ Brother *Succellus*, know you, that the men whom I sent to *Rome*, are return’d, and do bring for certain that *Valerian* the emperor has writ to the senate, that all bishops, priests, and deacons be executed speedily, &c.”
 “ The

Of *St. Cyprian* Pont. in vit. Cyp. Hier. in catal. Aug. Serm. de *St. Cyprian*

St. Cyprian’s epistle written a little before his death. Lib. 5. ep.

* *Sixtus*
died three
days before
St. *Lauren-*
rence.

“ The copy of which letters we hope will quickly come
“ hither, and so we are resolved by God’s grace to
“ suffer all, expecting at the mercy of our Lord, a
“ crown of life everlasting. Know you also that * *Sixtus*
“ the bishop of *Rome* was put to death the eighth day
“ before the ides of *August* last. I beseech you that
“ these things may be signified by our means to all our
“ fellow bishops in those provinces, to the end that by
“ their good exhortations, the whole brotherhood of
“ Christians may be strengthen’d and prepared to this
“ spiritual combat that is imminent; and that no man
“ in these times think so much upon death, as of the
“ immortality which is to follow death. Let every
“ man, I say, with full faith and all virtue, dedicated
“ to our Lord, rejoice rather than fear in this confes-
“ sion which we must make, assuring our selves, that
“ the true soldiers of *CHRIST* our God, will not be
“ slain, but crown’d therein.” So he.

The last
letter that
ever St. *Cy-*
prian wrote

And not many days after this, he living in certain
orchards or gardens in the country, was advertised by
his friends, that some men were sent to take him, and
bring him to the city of *Utica*; whereupon he fled.

Lib. 5.
Ep. 1.

And lest any man should think, perhaps, that it was
out of fear, he writ an epistle, the last that is extant of
his writing, to the priests, deacons and people of his
Church of *Carthage*, where he was bishop, shewing
them the reason why he had retired himself from the
hands of the persecutors, in these words: “ When it
“ was writ to us, dear brethren, that officers were sent
“ to lead me to *Utica*, by the counsel of our dear
“ friends I was content, upon just cause, to retire from
“ our orchards: for it seem’d to me convenient, for a
“ bishop, to make his last confession in that city where
“ he has govern’d God’s Church, to the end that by
“ his confession he many honour his own flock and
“ people. And it seem’d to me, that the honour of
“ our glorious Church of *Carthage* should be much
“ diminish’d at this time, if I, the bishop thereof,

St. *Cyprian*
would die
at *Car-*
thage and
not at *Uti-*
ca.

“ should

“ should receive my sentence and death in *Utica*. For
 “ which cause, I always desired and pray’d almighty
 “ God, that I might make my confession, and suffer
 “ in *Carthage*, and from thence depart to my
 “ Lord. So then we abide here at present in a very
 “ secret place, expecting the return of the proconsul
 “ from *Rome* to *Carthage*, who will bring with him,
 “ I doubt not, the determination of the emperor,
 “ touching both bishops and laymen, that are Chri-
 “ stians; and will decree that, which our Lord for
 “ the present, will have to be done. And as to what
 “ concerns you, my dearest brethren, according to the
 “ discipline which you have always received from me
 “ out of our Lord’s commandments, observe all peace
 “ and tranquillity among your selves. Let no man raise
 “ tumults touching the doings of his brethren. Let
 “ no man offer himself to the * persecutors; but when
 “ he is apprehended, then let him speak: for in that
 “ instant God will speak in us, who rather will have
 “ us confessors than professors in his cause. Touching
 “ other things that I would have you observe, I hope
 “ before my sentence be given, by our Lord’s instru-
 “ ction, to dispose in general. *CHRIST JESUS*
 “ keep and preserve you all in his Church.”

* This also
 does St.
Augustine
 repeat out
 of this
 place.
*Lib. 1.
 cont. Ep.
 Caudent.*

Soon after this was writ, that is, upon the thirteenth
 day of *September*, as *Pontius* and others write, two
 persecutors came suddenly upon him, and apprehending
 him, brought him to the new proconsul, call’d *Galerius*
Maximus, to *Carthage*; where after a glorious confession
 of his faith, the particulars whereof are too long to be
 set down, his sentence was read, that he should be
 beheaded. Whereunto *St. Cyprian* answer’d, *Deo gra-*
tias, *God be thanked*; and so the next day after, re-
 ceived his martyrdom at a place call’d *Sexti*, not far
 from *Carthage*, closing his own eyes, with all peace
 and comfort of mind, and commanding twenty crowns
 of gold to be given to him that cut off his head. And
Pontius that was there present, adds these words: “The

*Pont. in
 vita Cypri.
 de quo
 Hieron. in
 catal. vir
 illust.*

The mar-
 tyrdom of
St. Cyprian

St. Cyprian's solemn burial with tapers.

“ brethren stood round about him, weeping, and cast
 “ their napkins and prayer-books before him, that
 “ none of his blood might be suck'd up by the ground.
 “ His body, by reason of the curiosity of the *Gentiles*
 “ that press'd about him, was buried for the present in
 “ a place hard by, but the night following it was
 “ taken thence again by the Christians, and carried
 “ solemnly with torches and wax-tapers to the posses-
 “ sion of one *Macrobius Candidus*, in the way call'd
 “ *Appellensis*, nigh the fishponds, &c.”

Churches erected to St. Cyprian with solemn festival days.

And the reverend opinion of this man's sanctity was so great among Christians; even presently after his death, that they built Churches in his honour and memory, as appears by the history of St. *Victor* bishop of *Utica*, who lived the next age, and records in his first book, *De persecutione Vandalica*, how that the heretical *Vandals* that were *Arrians*, overthrew two godly Churches in *Africa* dedicated to St. *Cyprian*; the one in the place where he was martyr'd, call'd *Sexti*, the other in the place where his body was buried, call'd *Mappalia*. St. *Augustine* also in his confessions, *lib. 5. cap. 8.* makes mention of a Church in *Africa* dedicated to St. *Cyprian*, where *Monica* his mother pray'd for him at his departure towards *Italy*. And in divers places he mentions the solemnity which yearly was celebrated on the day of his martyrdom; which day, according to the Church's phrase, he calls his nativity. And in his tenth tome, he has a whole sermon made on the Feast of St. *Cyprian*'s nativity, of which sermon, not only venerable *Bede* in his commentary upon the second epistle to the *Ephesians*, but also *Possidius*, St. *Augustine*'s scholar, in *Indiculo* makes mention. And finally, St. *Augustine* every where, not only makes most honourable mention of this blessed martyr, but also against the *Donatists*, desires to be helpt by his prayers now in heaven. Wherefore his example ought greatly to move us.

Vide Ep.
 20. ad
 Honor. c. 5.
 Serm. 12.
 Tom. 10.

Lib. 5. de
 bapt. cont.
 donat. c. 17

I might here recount many other persecutions, and the singular combats of infinite particular men, which would never, I dare say, weary the Christian reader: But yet they would be too long for this place. *Eusebius* affirms, that to set down the combat sustain'd in his time, under *Dioclesian*, *Maximian*, *Maximinus*, and other tyrants, (which were the last general afflictions before the peace restored by the great *Constantine*) would be a matter of an infinite volume. For, says he, the persecution began in the month of *March*, when Christians were ready to celebrate the feast of Christ's holy passion. At which time, *Dioclesian's* first edict was, That all Christian Churches throughout the whole world should immediately be overthrown, all pastors thereof taken, and by all manner of torments that man's wit could invent, forced to sacrifice, together with their people. " Then, says *Eusebius*, was it a time when each man might easily see who loved the world, or who loved God; who was a good Christian, and who was a counterfeit; who was true corn, and who was chaff. " Many lost their souls, says he, in this combat, " and many got eternal crowns. The edict was executed with all rigour and fury throughout all provinces at once: and divers were the ends of such as came into trial. But the infinite glory of those that conquer'd, surpass'd far the infamy of those that fell."

The last general persecution under *Dioclesian* and others.

See *Euseb*
toto l. 8. c. 3
& de incops.
l. 9.

A time of trial.

And the enemy in the end being utterly confounded, would gladly have seem'd to have brought that to pass, which he neither did nor could. For when by force he had drawn Christians to the temples of the idols, he would have had it seem, that they came voluntarily; and when men would not sacrifice, he was desirous at least, that they should permit him to say and publish, that they had sacrificed. Others being beaten down upon their knees with clubs, were reported to have knelt of their own accord to adore the gods; whereof some cried openly notwithstanding, that they neither had nor

would do so, for any torment that could be laid upon them. But the more resolute sort were dealt with in a most cruel and barbarous manner, without measure, reason or order. Whereof you may read both many and strange examples in the eighth and ninth books of *Eusebius*, who writ the things as he saw them pass.

A comfortable
consideration.

And when our Saviour permitted all these extremities to fall upon his Church, then was the time nearest that he had determin'd to beautify her on earth, with greatest peace, rest, riches, and glory; even as he did immediately after, by converting the emperor *Constantine*, to be so zealous a Christian.

The end of
Eusebius's
history.

And here ends the history of *Eusebius*, concerning the conflicts of the first three hundred years after Christ's departure. But the ecclesiastical writers that succeed him, each man in his age, declare, that after the times of *Constantine*, the Catholick Church enjoy'd not long her temporal peace, but had her exercise from time to time, altho' in another sort than before; that is to say, not so much by pagans, as by such as had been her own children, a far more loathsome, odious, cruel, and dangerous affliction than the former. For as soon as *Constantine* was dead, and had left the *Roman* empire divided among his three sons; one of them who govern'd all the East, being corrupted by his wife, became an *Arrian* heretick. By whom, and by some other princes, infected afterwards with the same heresy, the Church of God sustain'd incredible distress for many years together.

The persecution of
Constantius the
emperor.
Zosimus.
Eutro. &
Victor. in
Constantio.
An. 337.

It would be endless to recount the tribulations that fell upon the Church of God, and the catholick defenders thereof, under this one emperor, in three or four and twenty years space that he reign'd: who beginning first with the slaughter of his father's friends and kindred, as namely his two uncles *Constantius* and *Anibalianus*, and others, pass'd to the persecution of priests and bishops, that were contrary to his *Arrian* sect and faction. But above all others were famous in this persecution

persecution three most excellent men, * *St. Athanasius* of the East Church, archbishop of *Alexandria* in *Ægypt*, and *St. Hilarius* of the West Church, bishop of *Poitiers* in *France*, together with † *Eusebius* bishop of *Vercels* in *Italy*, of whose vexations, exiles, afflictions, imprisonments, lies, and calumnies raised against them, as well by secular, as ecclesiastical judges, synods and councils violently and unlawfully gather'd by the power, authority, force, and fury of this intraged heretical emperor, several books might be made. And yet the heavenly vigour of almighty God's eternal grace was sufficient so to strengthen these his servants, that they were not conquer'd, but made conquerors in this conflict. And altho' it was publish'd every where by the enemies of God's Church, that they were seditious, head-strong, and troublers of the publick peace, because they stood out against the emperor and his heretical faction, in defence of Catholick truth; yet they were known then, and held ever since for great and true servants of almighty God, and have been declared so by infinite testimonies and miracles from his divine majesty, in their justification and defence. And so much for the time of *Constantius*, omitting infinite other things that might be rehearsed to this purpose.

After this *Constantius* the heretick, succeeded *Julian* the apostate; who having been brought up in the Christian religion during his youth, coming afterwards to the imperial crown, first of all emperors, became an apostate, forsook Christ, fell to pagan idolatry again, and shew'd himself as pernicious an enemy, as ever Christian religion had before, or after him. Of whom *Ruffinus* that lived at the same time, writes thus: "He was
" a more cunning persecutor than the rest, and consequently more cruel; proceeding not so much by force
" and torments, as by rewards, honours, flatteries, persuasions and deceit. By which means he overthrew
" more souls, than if he had proceeded altogether by
" violence.

* *Athan. in Apol. ad Constantium. Theod. l. 2. Zozim. l. 3. Socrat. l. 2. Hilar. l. 3. in Constantium. Ruff. lib. hist. 1. † Ruff. l. 2. cap. 27. Socrat. l. 3. cap. 4. Theod. l. 3. cap. 4. Zozim l. 5. cap. 11.*

The persecution of *Julian the apostate.*

Ruff. l. 3. cap. 32.

The relation of
St. Gregory
touching
Julian.

The worthy father St. *Gregory Nazianzen* writes two large orations of this man's actions, and shews that in his youth, both himself and St. *Basil* were acquainted with *Julian* in the grammar-school. At which time, he says they foresaw great wickedness in him; notwithstanding at that time, he seem'd very devout, and for devotion's sake, tho' a great prince, he would needs take upon him the office of lector in the Catholick Church. And besides that, says St. *Gregory*, he also began to build Churches to Christians Martyrs. But when he came to be emperor, he wash'd off his baptism with blood: *Manúsque suas*, says he, *profanavit, ut nimirum eas ab incruento illo Sacrificio, per quod nos Christo, ipsíusque passionibus & divinitati communicamus, elueret ac perpurgaret*: And prophaned his hands, to wit, that he might cleanse and purge them of that most pure and unbloody sacrifice of the altar, by which we are made partakers of the passion and divinity of our Saviour, &c.

Orat. prima in *Julian.* pag. 356.

The wicked edict of
Julian.

After this, he made an edict for the spoiling and profaning of all church-stuff, money, sacred ornaments, and holy vestments, that were to be had, for defiling of altars, for dishonouring priests, deacons, and virgins; but principally for breaking down of Martyrs sepulchres, and for destroying their Churches. In respect whereof, this holy father writes to him thus:

Orat. in *Jul.* 359.

“ Thou persecutor after *Herod*; thou traytor after
“ *Judas*: thou murderer of Christ after *Pilate*, thou
“ enemy of God after the *Jews*; dost thou not reve-
“ rence these holy sacrifices slain for *CHRIST*?
“ dost thou not fear those noble champions, *John*,
“ *Peter*, *Paul*, and others that pass'd through fire, sword,
“ beasts, tyrants, and what other cruelties soever might
“ be denounced against them, with a chearful heart?
“ dost thou not fear them, to whom now are assign'd
“ so great honours, and to whom festival days are or-
“ dain'd upon earth? by whom devils are driven away,
“ and diseases cured? and whose very bodies are able

The great
honours
done to
martyrs in
old time.

“ to do the same miracles now, which their holy souls
 “ did when they were upon earth? their bodies, I say,
 “ when they are handled by us, and honour’d; yea
 “ the only apparition and predictions, the only drops
 “ of blood of these bodies, do as great miracles as the
 “ bodies themselves. These bodies therefore dost thou
 “ not honour? &c.” Thus far *St. Gregory Nazianzen*.

After the death of wicked *Julian*; altho’ sometimes
 good emperors were sent by God, yet they remain’d not
 long, but the *Arrian* hereticks came in government again,
 and so did bear the sway for divers ages after, afflicting
 and persecuting the Catholics, as may appear by all the
 ecclesiastical writers that are extant of that time. The
 better to conjecture what was done and suffer’d in the
 world, I wish Christian reader, you would view that
 which remains written of one part only, and that for the
 space of few years; I mean, of the persecution of the
Arrian-Vandals in *Africa*, which began not long before
St. Augustine’s death, and lasted divers years after, and is
 recorded in three several books by the holy man *Victor*
 bishop of *Utica* that was one of the sufferers. The
 history is strange and worth reading, for it has very
 many things which set forth the perfect form of times
 that have follow’d since, and yet continue.

The *Arrian*
 an perse-
 cution.

Possidius that lived with *St. Augustine*, and after writ
 the history of his life, reports in the same, that when the
 holy man saw but the beginnings of this persecution, he
 was wonderfully afflicted with compassion in his mind.
 “ For, says he, he saw now already Catholick Churches
 “ destitute of their priests; sacred virgins and others
 “ that lived continent, to be dissipated and cast out;
 “ the hymns and praises of God to have ceased in most
 “ Churches; Churches burnt; the solemn service due
 “ to almighty God, no more used in the proper pla-
 “ ces: the divine sacrifices and sacraments, either not
 “ to be sought for any longer, or else that priests were
 “ not easily found to minister the same to such as sought
 “ them.” Hitherto are the words of *Possidius*.

*St. Augu-
 stine’s* grief
 and sorrow
 for the
Vandal
 persecu-
 tion.

But St. *Victor* speaking of the said persecution more in particular, shews, that altho' they were cruel against all Catholicicks in general, yet he says, *Præcipuè in Ecclesiis, Basilicisque & Cæmeteriis & Monasteriis sceleratiùs sæviebant.* They principally did exercise their wicked cruelty upon churches, oratories, church-yards, and monasteries. And then he goes forward, shewing their further cruelties and outrages in abusing priests and monks, and in spoiling altars, of which he says in particular, *De pallis altaris, prob nefas, camisas sibi & femoralia faciebant.* Of the * cloaths of the altar (O! wickedness) they made themselves shirts and breeches. He adds moreover that gathering divers sacred virgins together, against all shame, they would behold and handle the privy parts of their bodies; whom afterwards, because they would not be lewd with them, they tormented with fire, and threw into rivers with stones tied to their feet, saying to them, *Tells us, how do your bishops and clergymen use to lie with you?* besides all this, he says that they prohibited Catholicicks *Missas agere vel tractare,* to say mass. They forbid them also to bury Christians solemnly, with light, tapers, and torches; and finally, they forbid them all exercise of their Catholick Christian religion. And because in these things they were not obey'd as they desired, but were resisted openly and manfully by them that had spirit and courage from God to do it, therefore they did rage and fret above measure, and did exercise more extremity in all spiteful and villanous kind of cruelties, than did the pagan persecutors, either before or after. And this was the spirit of those ancient hereticks.

Now then to make our stay here, and to pass no further in this discourse, thou seest, dear brother, in these beginnings of God's Church, for five hundred years together after Christ's departure, how often our blessed Saviour permitted his dearest servants to be persecuted for their trial and merit. In which matter notwithstanding, is diligently to be consider'd: first,

the

Via. l. 1. de per. V. & ibid.

Post medior.
* Note these things, and confer them with our times.

Ibid. l. 2. initio.

The conclusion of this chapter.

the greatness and sharpness of this trial, to the end we may not be dishearten'd, when the like more or less, falls to our lot. Secondly, how miserable the fall of divers was in this trial, to the loss of their souls and eternal desolation. Thirdly, how the causes of this their fall, were either pride and temerity, whereby they tempted God; or else the love of this present world, whereby they were allured to forsake their Lord and Master. Fourthly, how glorious was the victory of those that were resolute, and how everlasting their reward both in this world, and in the world to come.

Four things to be consider'd.

Besides this, it will not be amiss for thee to consider, and that for thy particular comfort, if thou art a Catholick, how careful these holy martyrs were that suffer'd in the primitive Church, to keep themselves within the unity of Catholick faith and doctrine, deliver'd and continued universally by tradition, in all churches from age to age, to the end their sufferings and labours might receive their merit: how diligent also they were in advertising others of this important point, assuring them that without this, their labours could be of no profit to them. And as it is most evident and certain, that all these blessed Martyrs and Saints, whom I have named before, together with their brethren, did continue by succession for five hundred years together, in the common faith of christendom, call'd at that time, Catholick; and did defend the same both by words, writing, and suffering, against all apostates, hereticks, schismaticks, or other enemies whatsoever: so it is evident and apparent to the world, that the same universal and general Church, faith, and doctrine, which these men left, has continued ever since to this day, and will do to the world's end, fighting and striving against all new upstart enemies of the same tradition of Christian religion which these men so carefully commended to us.

A comfort-able consideration for a Catholick that suffers

By all which, as also by the manner of persecution that was then, and by the things themselves which they suffer'd

An illation upon the premises.

Heb. 12.

Exod. 13.

suffer'd at hereticks hands in these old times, every Catholick, that by God's special Grace is made worthy to suffer the like in these our days, may take singlar comfort and great instruction therein; considering *nubem testium*, as St. Paul calls it: that is, the great multitude and cloud of examples and witnesses that have gone before us, to instruct and animate us in this battle. And the holy Apostle used the word cloud, to allude by a metaphor to that cloud which our Saviour sent to the people of *Israel*, to direct their journey in the desert; insinuating hereby that these excellent examples of holy Martyrs and Confessors, whom I have said before to have suffer'd so valiantly in the primitive Church, ought to be to us a most certain direction both for courage, constancy, wisdom, alacrity, and resolution in this spiritual fight; assuring our selves, that following their steps, in fighting for the like cause, against the like enemies, with like fortitude and humility, and in like patience and longanimity, as they did; we shall not want the like grace, like comfort, like assistance, like merit, and like reward.

C H A P. VI.

The fifth impediment of Resolution, in the service of almighty God: proceeding from over much presumption in the mercies of our Saviour, without remembrance of his justice.

SECT. I. *That God is merciful and just.*

AS many allege for their excuse against the resolution which we persuade, the false reasons which we have already confuted: so is there another sort of people that take a contrary course, and far shorter way to elude all that can be said to move them to resolution, quite

quite opposite to them, whom I answer'd in the first * chapter of this second part. And this way is, to abuse the goodness of our Saviour Christ himself, answering to whatsoever you can say against them, with this only sentence: *God is merciful*. Of which men our Saviour complains grievously by the Prophet, when he says, *Supra dorsum meum fabricaverunt peccatores, prolongaverunt iniquitatem suam*: sinners have built upon my back, they have prolong'd their iniquity. By which words he signifies, that prolonging of our iniquities in hopes of God's mercy, is to build our sins on his back and shoulders. But what follows? will God bear this injury? no verily: for the next ensuing words are, *Dominus justus concidit cervices peccatorum*: God is just, and he will cut in sunder the necks, or pride, of sinners: to wit, those sinners that upon this vain presumption of God's mercy and indulgence, do prolong their evil life, and by that means build on the back of our Saviour. And the reason is, because nothing can be more injurious to God's divine majesty, than to make him the foundation of our sinful life, or continuance therein, who lost his own life for the extinguishing of sin in us, as St. Paul declares at large.

* Of fear and mistrust of God's mercy.

Psal. 128.

Building on God's back.

But you will say perhaps, and is not God then merciful? Yes truly, dear brother, he is most merciful; and there is neither end nor measure of his mercy; he is even merey it self; it is his nature and essence, and he can no more cease to be merciful, than he can cease to be God. But yet, as the Prophet says, he is also just. We must not so remember his mercy, as to forget his justice, *Dulcis, & rectus est Dominus*: our Lord is sweet, but yet upright and just also, says holy David. And in the same place, *All the ways of our Lord are mercy and truth*. Which words St. Bernard expounding in a certain sermon of his, says thus: "There are two feet of our Lord, whereby he walks in his ways; that is, *mercy and truth*: and God fastens both these feet upon the hearts of them who

How God is both merciful and just.

Psal. 24.

Serm. 52. *parvorum.* The two feet of God.

" turn

“ turn to him. And every sinner that will truly convert himself, must lay hand-fast on both these feet. “ For if he should lay hand on mercy only, not heeding *truth* and *justice*, he would perish by presumption. And on the other side, if he should apprehend *justice* only without *mercy*, he would perish by despair. To the end therefore that he may be saved, he must humbly fall down, and kiss both these feet: that in respect of God’s *justice*, he may retain *fear*; and in respect of his *mercy*, he may conceive *hope*.” And in another place, “ Happy is that soul upon which our Lord *JESUS CHRIST* has placed both his feet. I will not sing to thee *judgment alone*, nor yet *mercy alone*, my God, but “ I will sing to thee with the Prophet *David*; *Mercy and judgment joined together*. And I will never forget those two justifications of thine, by which we “ must be saved.”

Serm. 6.
in Cant.

Psal. 110.

Psal. 148.

Augustine
Tract. 33.
in *Joan.*

St. *Augustine* handles this point most excellently in divers of his works. “ Let them mark, says he, who “ so much love mercy and gentleness in our Lord; “ let them mark, I say, and fear also his truth. For, “ as the Prophet says, God is both sweet and just. “ Dost thou love because he is sweet? fear also because “ he is just. As a sweet Lord, he said, *I have held my peace at your sins*. But as a just Lord, he adds, *And think you that I will hold my peace still?* God is “ merciful and full of mercies, say you. It is most “ certain, yea add to this, that he bears a long while. “ But yet fear that which comes in the end of the “ same verse, *Et verax*: that is, he is also true and “ just. There are two things whereby sinners stand in “ danger; the one, in hoping too much, which is “ presumption; the other, in hoping too little, which “ is despair. Who is deceived by hoping too much? “ he who says to himself, God is a good God, a merciful God, and therefore, I will do what pleases me. “ And why so? because God is a merciful God; a

Psal. 24.

Psal. 102.

Two dangers of
sinners.

“ gentle

“gentle God. These men run into danger by
 “hoping too much. Who are in danger by despair?
 “they who seeing their sins grievous, and thinking
 “them impossible to be pardon’d, say within them-
 “selves, well, we are sure to be damn’d, why then do
 “we not whatsoever pleases us best in this life? these
 “men are murder’d by despair, the others by hope.
 “What therefore does God to gain both these sorts of
 “men? to him who is in danger by hope, he says,
 “*Do not say with thy self, the mercy of God is great,* *Eccles. 5.*
 “*he will be merciful to the multitude of my sins; for his*
 “*wrath works upon sinners.* To him who is in dan-
 “ger by despair, he says, *That at what time soever a* *Ezek. 18.*
 “*sinner shall convert himself, he will forget his iniqui-*
 “*ties.*” Thus far St. *Augustine*, besides much more
 which he adds in the same place, touching the great
 peril and folly of those men, who upon vain hope of
 God’s merey, do persevere in their evil life.

It is truly, dear brother, a very bad consequence, A bad manner of reasoning.
 and a most unjust kind of reasoning, to say, that be-
 cause almighty God is merciful, and patient, therefore
 will I abuse his mercy and continue in my wickedness.
 The Scripture teaches us not to reason so, but rather
 quite contrary. God is merciful, and expects my con-
 version; and the longer he expects, the more grievous
 will be his punishment when it comes, if I neglect his
 patience; and therefore I ought presently to accept of
 his mercy. Thus St. *Paul* reasons, who says, *Dost thou* Rom. 2.
contemn the riches of his goodness, and patience, and
longanimity, not knowing that the longanimity of God
brings thee to penance? But according to thy hardness
and impenitent heart, thou heapest to thy self wrath in
the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the just judg-
ment of God. In which words, St. *Paul* signifies, that
 the longer God suffers us with patience in our wicked-
 ness, the greater heap of vengeance does he gather
 against us, if we persist obstinate in the same. Where- Aug. tract.
 unto St. *Augustine* adds another consideration of great 53 in Joan
 dread

Note this. dread and fear ; and that is, “ If he offers thee grace,
 “ says he, to-day, thou knowest not whether he will
 “ do the same to-morrow. If he gives thee life and
 “ memory this week, thou knowest little whether thou
 “ shalt enjoy that benefit the next.”

God's
 goodness
 nothing
 helps those
 that perse-
 vere in sin.
Psalms 72.

The holy Prophet beginning his seventy second *Psalms*, of the dangerous prosperity of worldly men, uses these words of admiration ; *How good a God is the God of Israel, to them that are of a right heart !* and yet in all that *Psalms* he does nothing else but shew the heavy justice of God towards the wicked, even when he gives them most prosperities and worldly wealth ; and his conclusion is, *For behold they that make themselves far from thee shall perish : thou hast destroy'd all that fornicate from thee.* By which is signified, that how good soever God be to the just, yet that's nothing to the relief of the wicked who are to receive just vengeance at his hands, amidst the greatest mercies bestow'd upon the godly. *The eyes of our Lord are upon the just*, says the same Prophet *and his ears upon their prayers ; but the countenance of our Lord upon them that do evil things, to destroy their memory from out of the earth.*

It was an old practice of deceiving prophets, resisted
Jere. 6. 9. strongly by the true Prophets of God, to cry *Peace, Peace*, to wicked men, when indeed there was
Ezek. 13. nothing towards them, but danger, sword, and destruction ; according as the said true Prophets foretold, and as the event proved. Wherefore the Prophet *David* gives us a notable and sure rule to govern our hope and confidence withal, when he says, *Sacrificate sacrificium Justitiæ, & sperate in Domino* : Do you sacrifice of righteousness, and then trust in him. Wherewith
1 John 5. St. *John* agrees, when he says, *If our heart do not reprehend us* (for a wicked life) *we have confidence towards God* : as tho' he should say, If our conscience be guilty of a lewd and wicked life, and we resolve to dwell and continue therein, then in vain have we confidence in the mercies of God, to whose just judgment we stand subject for our wickedness.

It is most wonderful, and dreadful to consider, how almighty God has acted with his best beloved in this world, upon offence given by occasion of sin; how easily he has changed countenance; how soon he has broken off friendship, as it were; how straightly he has taken account, and how severely he has punish'd. The Angels that he created with so great care and love, and to whom he imparted so singular privileges of all kind of perfections, that he made them, in a certain manner, almost gods, committed but only one sin of pride against his Majesty, and that only in thought, as divines hold; and yet presently, all that good-will and favour was changed into justice, and that so severe, that they were thrown down to eternal torments without redemption, for ever to abide the rigour of hell-fire, and intolerable darkness, as the holy Apostles *St. Peter* and *Jude* do affirm.

The severity of God's punishment upon sin.

The Angels.

Isaiah 34.
D. Thom.
q. 63.

2 *Peter 3.*
Ep. Jude.

Adam and Eve.

After this, almighty God made himself another new friend of flesh and blood, who was our father *Adam* in paradise, where God conversed with him, most friendly and familiarly. He call'd him, he walk'd and talk'd with him, he gave him the dominion of the world, made him his substitute, made all creatures in the world subject to him, he brought them all before him, to the end that he should give them their names: he made a mate and companion for him, he bless'd them both; and finally, shew'd all possible tokens of love. But what follow'd? *Adam* committed but one sin, and that at the enticement of another; and that also a sin of small importance, as it may seem to man's reason, being but the eating of a forbidden apple; and yet it was no sooner done, but all friendship was broken between God and him: he was thrust out of paradise, condemn'd to perpetual misery, and all his posterity to eternal damnation, together with himself, if he had not repented. And how severely this grievous sentence was executed afterwards, may appear by the infinite millions that went to hell for this sin, for the space of four thousand

Great severity.

thousand years that pass'd before it was ransom'd : which finally could not be done, but by the coming down of God's own Son, the second person of the blessed Trinity, his taking flesh, and by his intolerable sufferings and death in the same.

Moses and Aaron.

Num. 20,

27. 23.

Gen. 10.

33, 34.

The two miracles of the world, *Moses* and *Aaron*, were of singular authority and favour with God ; inso-much that they could obtain any thing at his hands for other men. And yet when they offended God once themselves at the waters of contradiction in the desert of *Sin*, because they doubted somewhat of the miracle promised them by almighty God, and thereby did dishonour his Majesty before the people, as he says, they were presently rebuked most sharply for the same. And altho' they repented heartily for that offence, and so obtain'd remission of the fault or guilt ; yet there was laid upon them a grievous punishment for the same, that they themselves should not enter into the land of promise, but should die when they came within the sight thereof. And altho' they intreated God most earnestly for the release of this penance ; yet they could never obtain the same at his hands, but he always answer'd them ; Seeing you have dishonour'd me before the people, you shall die for it, and shall not enter in the land of promise.

Saul.

1 Reg. 10.

8. 11.

Acts 13. 2.

1 Reg. 13,

15, 16.

In what special great favour was *Saul* with God, when he chose him to be the first king of his people ? when he made *Samuel* the Prophet honour him so much, and to anoint him prince upon God's own inheritance, as he calls it ? when he commended him so much, and took such tender care over him ? and yet afterward, because he broke God's commandment, in reserving certain spoils of war, which he should have destroy'd ; tho' he reserved them to honour God withal, as he pretended, yet he was presently cast off by God, degraded of his dignity, given over to the hands of an evil spirit, brought to infinite miseries, and finally, so forsaken and abandon'd by God, that he slew himself ;

1 Reg. 16.

1 Reg. 31.

1 Peter 10.

himself; his sons were crucified on a cross by his enemies, and all his family and lineage extinguish'd for ever.

King *David*, taken in his place, was the chosen and dear friend of God, and honour'd with the title of *One* David. 2 Reg. 12. that was according to God's own heart: but yet, as soon as he had sinn'd, the Prophet *Nathan* was sent to denounce God's heavy displeasure and punishment upon him and his, which afterwards ensued during his whole life, notwithstanding the great and voluntary penance, that himself added for the pacifying of God's wrath, by fasting, prayer, weeping, wearing of sackcloth, eating of ashes, and the like, whereby is evident, that how great soever God's favour is to any man, yet he cannot avoid his justice, if he offend him. Psalms 34. 68, 108, 101. Psalm 29.

The holy Scripture has infinite examples of this matter; as the rejection of *Cain* and his posterity straight upon his murder. The drowning of the whole world in the time of *Noah*. The dreadful consuming of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, with the cities about them, by fire and brimstone. The sending down alive to hell *Chore*, *Dathan*, and *Abiron*, with the slaughter of two hundred and fifty, their adherents, for rebellion against *Moses* and *Aaron*, and other fourteen thousand seven hundred soon after. The sudden killing of *Nadab* and *Abiu*, sons of *Aaron*, and chosen Priests, for once offering on the altar other fire than was appointed them. The most terrible striking dead of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, for retaining some part of their own goods by deceit, from the Apostles: with many more such examples which holy writ does recount. Gen. 4. Gen. 8. Gen. 19. Num. 16. Lev. 10. Acts 9.

And as for the grievousness of God's justice, and heaviness of his hand, when it lights upon us, tho' it may appear sufficiently by all these examples before alleged (wherein the particular punishments, as you see, are most grievous) yet I will repeat one act of almighty God more, out of Scripture, which expresses the same in a wonderful manner. It is well known that *Benja-*

min, among all the twelve sons of *Jacob*, was the dearest to his father, as appears in the book of *Genesis* (and therefore also greatly respected by God, and his tribe placed in the best part of all the land of Promise, upon the division thereof, having *Jerusalem*, *Jericho*, and other the best cities within it) notwithstanding for one only sin committed by certain private men in the city of *Gabaa*, upon the wife of a Levite, God punish'd the whole tribe in this order, as holy Scripture recounts. He caus'd all the other eleven tribes to rise against them, and first, to come to the house of God in *Silo*, to ask his advice, and to follow his direction in this war against their brethren. And thence having by God's appointment given battle twice to the tribe of *Benjamin*, the third day God gave them so great a victory that they slew all the living creatures within the compass of that tribe; except only six hundred men, that made their escape into the desert; the rest were slain, both man, woman, children, and infants, together with all the beasts and cattle; and all the cities, villages, and houses burnt. And all this, for the sin some of them had committed.

A consideration upon the premises.

Deut. 10.
Heb. 10.
Psalms 118.

Heb. 12.

Mat. 26.

Who then, dear Christian, will not confess with *Moses*, that *God is a great God, and terrible, that accepts no person*? Who will not confess with *St. Paul*, That *it is horrible to fall into the hands of the living God*? who will not say with holy *David*, *A judiciiis tuis timui*? I have fear'd at the remembrance of thy judgments? If God would destroy a whole tribe for one offence only; if he would not pardon *Core*, *Dathan*, and *Abiron*, the sons of *Aaron*; *Ananias* and *Saphira*; if he would not forgive *Esau*, tho' he demanded it with tears, as *St. Paul* says; if he would not remit the punishment of one fault to *Moses* and *Aaron*, altho' they ask'd it with great instance; if he would not forgive one proud thought to the Angels, nor the eating of one apple to *Adam*, without infinite punishment; nor would pass over the cup of affliction from his own dear

dear Son, tho' he ask'd the same thrice upon his knees: what reason hast thou, brother, to think that he will let pass so many sins of thine unpunish'd? what cause hast thou to imagine, that he will deal extraordinarily with thee, and break the course of his justice for thy sake? art thou better than those whom I have nam'd? or hast thou any privilege from his majesty above them? or is he another God now, than he was then?

If thou wouldst consider the great and strange effects of his justice, which we see daily executed in the world, thou wouldst have little cause to flatter thy self so dangerously as thou dost. We see, that notwithstanding God's mercy, yea, after the death and passion of Christ our Saviour, for the salvation of the whole world; yet so many millions are damn'd daily by the justice of almighty God; so many infidels, heathens, jews, and turks, that remain in the darkness of their own ignorance; and among Christians, so many hereticks and mis-belivers; and among Catholicks, so many evil livers, that Christ truly said, That they were few that should be saved. Altho' his death was a ransom for all, if by their own wickedness they made themselves not unworthy thereof. And we see, that before the coming of our Saviour, all the world was much more in a way to damnation for many thousand years together, excepting a few *Jews* who were the people of God. And yet among them also, the greater part were not saved, as may be conjectured by the speeches of the Prophets from time to time; and especially by the sayings of Christ to the Pharisees and other rulers of that nation. Now then, if God to satisfy his justice, would let so many millions perish in punishment of their sins, as he also now daily permits, without any prejudice or impeachment to his infinite mercy; why may he not also damn thee for thy sins, notwithstanding his mercy, seeing thou not only dost commit them without fear, but also dost obstinately persist in the same upon presumption of his mercy?

Great and
strange ef-
fects of
God's ju-
stice.

Mat. 7. 20.

S E C T. II.

Whether God's Mercy be greater than his Justice.

*Psalm 14.
James 2.*

*Mat. 17. &
20.*

BUT here, perhaps, some one may say, if God is so severe in punishing every sin, and if he damns so many thousands for one that he saves, how is that true which holy writ so often repeats, That the mercies of God are above all his other works; and are exalted above his judgments? for if the number of the damn'd be so great, and so much exceeds the number of those who are saved, it seems that the work of justice surpasses the work of mercy. To which I answer, first, that as for the small number of them that are saved, and enter in at the narrow gate; as also for the great number of such as are damn'd by running the common path of perdition in this world, we can in no wise doubt of it. For besides all other proofs thereof, Christ himself that stands instead of all, has made the matter certain, and out of question, by his asseveration thereof, more than once in the Gospel. We are therefore to see, how notwithstanding all this, the mercy of God does exceed his other works.

*The first
way how
God's mer-
cy is above
his justice.
Hosea 12.*

And first, his mercy may be said to exceed, for our salvation is solely of his mercy, and our damnation from our selves only, as from the first and principal cause thereof; according to the saying of God by the Prophet, *Perditio tua ex te Israel, tantummodo in me auxilium tuum*: Thy perdition is only from thy self, O *Israel*, and all the assistance thou hast to do good, is only from me. So that as we must acknowledge God's grace and mercy for the author of every good thought and act we do, and consequently ascribe all our salvation to him, who prevents, moves, and assists our free-will with his grace: so none of our evil acts, for which we are damn'd, do proceed from him, but only from our selves; and so he is no cause at all of our damnation, as he is of
our

our salvation : and in this his mercy exceeds his justice. Because he crowns in us his own works, tho' now made ours by the privilege of his grace, but damns in us only our own misdeeds.

Secondly, his mercy exceeds his justice, in respect of his will and desire; for he desires all men to be saved, as *St. Paul* teaches, and himself protests, when he says *I will not the death of him that dies --- return ye and live.* And again, by the same Prophet he complains grievously, that men will not accept of his mercy which he offers. *I will not the death of the impious, but that the impious convert from his way and live. Convert, convert ye from your most evil ways : and why will ye die, O house of Israel ?* by which appears that he offers his mercy most willingly and freely to all, but uses his justice only upon necessity, and as it were constrain'd thereunto by our obstinate behaviour. This our Saviour Christ signifies more plainly and pathetically, when with tears he says to *Jerusalem*, *O Jerusalem which killest the Prophets, and stonest them that were sent to thee, how often would I gather together thy children, as the hen does gather together her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not ? behold your house shall be left desert to you.* Here you see the mercy of God offer'd to the *Jews* ; but seeing they refused it, he was forced as it were, to pronounce this heavy sentence of destruction and desolation upon them ; which he fulfill'd within forty or fifty years after, by the hands of *Titus* and *Vespasian* emperors of *Rome*, who utterly overthrew the city of *Jerusalem*, and the whole nation of *Jews*, whom we see dispersed over all the world at this day, in bondage both of body and soul. Which work of God's justice, tho' it is most terrible ; yet was his mercy greater to them, in that he sought by so many means to prevent and save them, if they had not rejected the same mercy so obstinately as they did.

Thirdly, his mercy exceeds his justice, even towards the damn'd and reprobate themselves, in this life at least :

The second way.

1 Tim. 2.

Ezek. 12.

Ezek. 33.

Mat. 23.

Joseph. de bello Jud. l. 7. c. 15, 16, 17.

The third way.

least: for that he uses infinite means to lead them to their salvation, as namely, by giving them free-will, and assisting the same with his grace to do good, as has been said; by moving them inwardly with infinite good inspirations; by alluring them outwardly with exhortations, promises, examples of others; as also by sickness, adversities, and other gentle corrections; by giving them time to repent, with occasions, opportunities, and incitements to the same; and by threatening them with eternal death, if they repent not. All which things being effects of mercy, and goodness towards them; they must needs confess in their greatest fury of despair and torments, that altho' the execution of his justice and judgments is most terrible and dreadful, when they fall upon them: yet are they righteous, and justified in themselves, and no ways to be compared with the excessive greatness of his mercies, used towards them in this life.

Out of this then we learn also that to be true, which the Prophet says: to wit, *God loves mercy and judgment*. And again: *Mercy and truth have met each other. Justice and peace have kiss'd, &c.* We see the reason in like manner, why the same Prophet protested of himself: *Mercy and judgment, O Lord, I will sing to thee*: not mercy alone, nor judgment alone, but *mercy and judgment*: that is, I will not presume upon thy mercy so, as not to fear thy judgment, nor yet will I fear thy judgment, so as ever to despair of thy mercy. The fear of God's judgments must always be join'd with our confidence in God's mercy. But what fear? that fear truly, which the Scripture describes, when it says: The fear of our Lord expels sin. The fear of God hates all evil. He that fears God neglects nothing. He that fears God, will turn and look into his own heart. He will not be incredulous to that which he says; but will keep his ways, and seek out the things that are pleasant to him. They will prepare their heart and sanctify their soul in his sight.

This

This is the description of the true fear of God, set down by the Holy Ghost himself. This is the description of that fear, which is so much commended and commanded in every part and parcel of God's word: of that fear, I say, which is call'd, the fountain of life, the root of prudence, the crown and fulness of wisdom, the glory and gloriation of a Christian, a happy gift. Of him that has this fear the Scripture says: *Blessed is the man who fears our Lord, he shall have great delight in his commandments.* And again, *With him that fears our Lord it shall be well in the latter end, and in the day of his death he shall be blessed.* Finally, of such as have this fear, the Scripture says, That God is their foundation: God has prepared a great multitude of sweetness for them: God has prepared them an inheritance: God is as merciful to them, as the father is merciful to his children. And, to conclude, *He will do the will of them that fear him, and will hear their prayer, and save them.*

The praise of true fear.

Prov. 14.

Eccles. 1.

& 5.

Psal. 111.

Eccles. 1.

Psal. 144.

This holy fear had holy Job, when he said to God: *I feared all my works.* And he yields the reason thereof: *Knowing that thou didst not spare the offender.* This fear the other wanted, of whom the Prophet says, *He has said in his heart God has forgotten, he has turn'd away his face not to see for ever ---- Wherefore has the impious provoked God? for he has said in his heart, he will not inquire.* It is a great exasperation of God against us, to take the one half of God's nature from him, which is, to make him merciful without justice; and to live so, as if God would take no account of our life; whereas he has protested most earnestly the contrary: saying, That he is a hard and covetous man, who will not be content to receive his own again, but also will have usury for the loan; that he will have a strict reckoning of all the goods lent us; that he will have fruit for all the labours he has bestow'd upon us; and finally, that he will have an account of every word that we have spoken.

Job 9.

Psal. 9.

Our Saviour Christ, in the threescore and eighth *Psalms*, which in sundry places of the Gospel, he interprets to be written of himself, among other dreadful curses, which he sets down against the reprobate, has these: *Let their eyes be darken'd that they see not, and make their back crooked always. Pour out thy wrath upon them, and let the fury of thy wrath overtake them--- Add thou iniquity upon their iniquity, and let them not enter into thy justice. Let them be put out of the book of the living, and with the just let them not be written.* Here we see the greatest curse which God can lay upon us next to blotting us out of the book of life, is to suffer us to be so blinded, as to add iniquity upon iniquity, and not to enter into consideration of his justice. For which cause also, this confident kind of sinning upon hope of God's mercy, is accounted by divines for the first of the six grievous sins against the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour, in the Gospel signifies, to be so hardly pardon'd by his Father. And the reason why they call this a sin against the Holy Ghost, is because it wilfully rejects one of the principal means left by the Holy Ghost, to retrieve us from sin, which is the fear and respect of the justice of God upon sinners.

D. Thom.
2. 2. q. 14.
art. 1, 2, 3.

Why presumption is a sin against the Holy Ghost.

The danger of not fearing.

Rom. 13.
Prov. 28.

Wherefore, to conclude this matter, methinks we may apply the same argument touching the fear of God's justice, which *St. Paul* uses to inculcate to the *Romans*, the fear of God's ministers temporal princes. *Princes are no fear*, says he, *to the good work, but to the evil. But wilt thou not fear the power? do good, and thou shalt have praise of the same---but if thou do evil, fear, for he bears not the sword without cause.* In like manner we may say to those, who make God so merciful, that no man ought to fear his justice. Would ye not fear, my brethren, the justice of God in punishment? live virtuously and you shall be as void of fear as lions are, according to the saying of the wise man. *Perfect charity*, says also *St. John Evangelist*, *casts out fear.* But if you live wickedly, then you

1 John 4.

you have cause to fear, for God call'd not himself a judge for nothing.

If the matter was so secure, as many men fondly persuade themselves it is, *St. Peter* would never have said to Christians newly baptized: *In fear converse you the time of your peregrination.* Nor *St. Paul* to the same men: *With fear and trembling work your salvation.* 1 Peter 3. Phil. 2.

But here, perhaps, some men will ask me, how then does the same Apostle in another place say, *God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love, and sobriety?* To which I answer, that our spirit is not

a spirit of servile fear, that is, to live in fear only for dread of punishment, without love; but it is a spirit of love; join'd with such a fear as children have of offending their father, not only in respect of his punishment, but principally for his goodness towards them, and benefits bestow'd upon them. This *St. Paul* declared plainly to the *Romans*, shewing the difference

Servile fear and the fear of children different.

between servile fear, and the fear of children; *You have not received the spirit of servitude again,* says he, *in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, wherein we cry, Abba (Father).* He says here to the *Romans*, you have not received again the spirit of servitude in fear, because their former spirit, whilst they were *Gentiles*, was only in servile fear, for they honour'd and adored their idols, not for any love they bore them, being so numerous as they were, and such notable lewdness reported of them (I mean of *Jupiter, Mars, Venus*, and the like) but only for fear of hurt from them, if they did not serve, adore, and honour them.

Rom. 8. How the fear of the Gentiles was meer servile.

St. Peter, also in one sentence expounds all this matter. For having said, *The fear of them fear you not, and be not troubled* (meaning of the servile fear of wicked men) he adds presently: Do but sanctify our Lord Christ in your hearts; *with modesty and fear, having a good conscience*; so that the spirit of servile fear, which is grounded only upon regard of punishment,

1 Peter 3.

ment,

ment, is forbidden us to rest in : but the loving fear of children, is commanded. And there are two things also to be noted, about this.

Servile fear
necessary to
beginners.

The first, that altho' we are forbid to dwell upon the spirit of servile fear, of punishment and chastisement, especially when we are now enter'd into the service of God, yet it is most profitable for sinners, and for such as yet do but begin to serve God, because it moves them to repentance, and to look about them.

Prov. 1.

For which cause it is call'd by the wise man, *The beginning of wisdom*. And therefore *Jonas* in regard to

John 3.
Mat. 3.

the *Ninivites*, and *St. John Baptist* in regard to the *Jews*, and all the Prophets in regard to sinners, endeavour'd to stir up this fear, by threatening the dangers and punishments which were imminent upon them, if they repented not. But yet afterwards when men are converted to God, and do go forward in his service ; they change every day this servile fear into love, till they arrive at last to that state, whereof *St. John* says, *That perfect love or charity casts out fear*. Whereunto *St. Augustine* says : That fear is the servant, sent before to prepare place in our hearts for the mistress, which is charity. Which being once enter'd in, and perfectly placed, fear goes out again and gives place to the same. But where this fear never enters at all, there it is impossible for charity ever to come and dwell, says this holy father.

John 1.
Tract. 9.
in ep. 1.
Joan.

Servile fear
may well
remain also
afterwards.

The second thing to be noted is, that altho' this fear of punishment is not in very perfect men, or at least, is less in them than in others, as *St. John*, in the place before alleged, teaches, yet being join'd with love and reverence, as it ought to be, it is most profitable and necessary for all Christians, whose life is not so perfect, nor charity so great, as to have that perfection, whereof *St. John* speaks, when he says, *That perfect charity casts out fear*. This appears also by our Saviour Christ's persuading this fear of punishment even to his Apostles, saying, *Fear you him, who after he has killed, has*
power

Luke 12.
Mat. 10.

power to cast into hell: yea, I say to you, fear him. The same St. Paul teaches the *Corinthians*, who were good Christians, laying down first the justice of God, and thereupon persuading them to fear. *For we must* 2 Cor. 5. *all be manifested, says he, before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he has done either good or evil. Knowing therefore the fear of our Lord, we use persuasion to men.* Nay, which is more, St. Paul testifies, that notwithstanding all his favours received from God, yet he retain'd this fear of God's justice, as appears by these words of his: *I chastise my body,* 1 Cor. 9. *and bring it into servitude, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, my self become reprobate.*

Now then, if St. Paul stood in awe of the justice of God, notwithstanding he was conscious to himself of no sin or offence, as he protests: what oughtest thou to be, whose conscience remains guilty of so many misdeeds and wickednesses? *Know you,* says St. Paul, *that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person, has inheritance in the kingdom of CHRIST.* And immediately after, as tho' this had not been sufficient, he adds, to prevent the folly of sinners who flatter themselves, *Let no man seduce you with vain words: for, for these things comes the anger of God, upon the children of diffidence. Become not therefore partakers with them.* As if he should say, they that flatter you, and say, *God is merciful, and will pardon easily all these and the like sins:* these men deceive you, for the wrath and vengeance of God lights upon the children of unbelief, for these matters: that is, it lights upon those who will not believe God's justice, nor his threats against sin, but rashly presuming on his mercy, do persevere in sin, till on the sudden God's wrath does rush upon them, and then it is too late to amend. Wherefore, says he, if you be wise, be not partakers of their folly, but fear God's justice, and amend your lives presently, while you have time. And this admonition of St. Paul shall

The conclusion.

1 Cor. 4.

Ephes. 5.

St. Paul's
wholsom
exhortation.

shall be sufficient to conclude against all those that refuse or defer their resolution of amendment, upon vain hopes of God's pardon or toleration in their sins and wicked life.

C H A P. VII.

The sixth thing that uses to hinder men from mature resolution: which is the deceitful hope and persuasion to do it better, or with more ease afterwards.

SECT. I. *The longer we defer our conversion, the more difficulty we find in it.*

THE reasons and authorities which hitherto have been alleged, might seem, I doubt not, sufficient in the judgment and censure of any reasonable man, to prove the necessity of the resolution whereof we treat, and to remove all impediments that offer themselves against the same. But yet because, as *Prov. 18.* the wise man says, he who is once resolved to break with his friend, seeks occasions how to do it with some colour and shew; so there are many in the world, who having no other excuse for their breaking and keeping off from God, seek to cover it with this pretence, that they mean by his grace, to amend all in time. And this time is put off from day to day, till almighty God, in whose hands only the moments of time are, shuts them out of time, and sends them to eternal pains, because they abused the singular benefit of time which he gave them in this world.

Aug. lib. de fide ad Pet. cap. 3. Let them hear St. *Augustine*: “ They are oftentimes so prevented by the sudden wrath of almighty God, that they neither receive time to convert themselves, nor

“ nor pardon for their sins”. So that this is one of the greatest and most dangerous deceits, and yet the most ordinary and universal, that the enemy of mankind uses with the children of *Adam*. And I dare say boldly, that among Christians, more perish by this deceit, than by all other subtilties which he uses besides. He knows very well the force of this snare above all others, and therefore urges it so much to every man. He considers better than we do the importance of delay in a matter so weighty, as is our conversion and salvation. He is not ignorant how one sin draws on another ; how he that is not fit to-day, will be less fit to-morrow ; how custom grows into nature ; how old diseases are hardly cured ; how God withdraws his grace ; how his justice is ready to punish every sin ; and how by delay we exasperate the same, and heap vengeance on our own heads, as *St. Paul* says. He is privy to the uncertainty and perils of our life, to the dangerous chances that fall out hourly, to the impediments that will multiply daily, to hinder our conversion more and more : all this our ghostly enemy knows, and considers the same well ; and for that cause persuades so many to delay as he does. For not being able any longer to blind the understanding of so many Christians, but that they must needs see clearly the utility and necessity of this resolution, and that all the impediments in the world which divert them from the same, are but trifles and meer deceits ; he runs to this only refuge of delay, persuading them to defer a little, and that in time to come, they will have a better occasion, and more opportunity to do it at leisure, than they have at present.

This slight *St. Augustine* experienced in his conversion, as he himself writes. For he was persuaded that no salvation could be had for him, but by change and amendment of his life : yet the enemy held him for a time in delay, saying to him, *Stay yet a little ; defer yet for a time*. Thereby, as he says, to bind him faster in the custom of sin, till by the omnipotent power of God's

Many causes why the devil persuades us to delay.

Rom. 8.

*L. 8.
Conf. 11.
7 & 12.*

God's grace, and his own most earnest endeavour, he broke violently from him, crying to God, *Why shall I longer say, to-morrow? why shall I not do it even at this instant?* and so he did, even in his very youth, leading afterwards a most holy and perfect Christian life.

The causes
which
make our
conversion
harder by
delay.

But if we will discover yet further the greatness and peril of this deceit, let us consider the causes that may hinder our resolution and conversion at this present, and we shall see them all increased, and strengthen'd by delay, and consequently the matter made harder and more difficult for the time to come, than it is now. For first, as I have said, the continuance of sin brings custom; which once having got prescription upon us, is very hard to remove, as by experience we daily find in all habits that have taken root in us. Who can remove, for example, without great difficulty, a long custom of drunkenness, swearing, or of any other evil habit, once settled upon him. Secondly, the longer we persist in our sinful life, the more God withdraws his grace and assistance from us; which grace is the only means to make the way of virtue easy to men, and their conversion possible. Thirdly, the power and kingdom of the devil is more establish'd and confirm'd in us by continuance, and so the harder to be removed. Fourthly, the liberty of our free-will is more and more weaken'd and daunted by repetition of sin, tho' not extinguish'd. Fifthly, the faculties of our mind are more corrupted, the understanding is more darken'd, the will more perverted, the appetite more disorder'd. Sixthly and lastly, our sensual parts and passions are more stirred up and strengthen'd against the rule of reason, and by continuance of time, harder to be repress'd, than they were before.

Put then, dear Christian, all this together, and consider indifferently with thy self, whether it is more likely that thou shalt make this resolution hereafter, more easily than now. Hereafter, I say, when by longer custom of sin, the evil habit will be more deeply

deeply rooted in thee, the devil in more firm possession of thee, God's help further from thee, thy mind more infected, thy judgment more weakn'd, thy good desires extinguish'd, thy passions confirm'd, thy body corrupted, thy strength diminish'd, and all the faculties of thy soul more perverted. We see by experience, that a ship which leaks, is more easily emptied at the beginning than afterwards. We see, that a ruinous palace, the longer it is without repair, the more charge and labour it will require in repairing. We see, that if a man drive in a nail with a hammer, the more blows he gives upon it, the harder it is to pluck it out again. How then thinkest thou to commit sin upon sin, and by perseverance therein, to find the redress, more easy hereafter than now? It is written among the lives of old hermites, how that on a time an Angel shew'd to one of them in the wilderness, a certain silly fellow that hew'd down wood; who having made to himself a great burden to carry thence, laid it on his back, and because it was uneasy and press'd him much, he cast it down again, and put a great deal more to it, and then began to lift at it a-new; but when he felt it heavier than before, he fell into a great rage, and added twice as much more to it, thereby to make it lighter. Whereat when this holy man mused much, the Angel told him, that this was a figure of those in the world, who finding it somewhat unpleasant to resist one or two vices at the beginning, defer their conversion, and add twenty or forty more to them, thinking to find the matter more easy to be remedied afterwards.

St. *Augustine* expounding the miracle of our Saviour, in raising *Lazarus*, who had been dead four days as the Evangelist says, from death to life, examines the cause why Christ wept, cried out, and troubled himself in spirit, before he did it, whereas he raised others with greater facility. And he concludes the mystery to have been, for that *Lazarus* was now dead four days, and also buried; which signifies the four

The same shew'd by comparisons.

An example in practice to spiritual Sanctuaries.

Tract. 49. in Joan. John 11. Mat. 9. Luke 7.

Four degrees of a sinner.

degrees

degrees of a sinner: the first, in voluntary delectation of sin; the second, in consent; the third, in fulfilling it by work; the fourth in continuance or custom thereof: "Wherein whosoever is once buried, says "this holy father, he is hardly raised to life again, "without a great miracle of God, and many tears of "his own part."

The reason
of more
difficulty
by delay.
Eccles. 10.
Job 20.

The reason hereof, is that which the wise man says, *Long sickness grieves the physician: short sickness the physician cuts off at the first. His bones shall be fill'd with the vices of his youth,* says one of the friends of *Job,* and they shall sleep with him in the dust. What folly then is it, to defer our amendment to our old age, when we shall have more impediments and difficulties by a great deal, than we have now.

A compa-
rison.

If it seem hard to thee to do penance now, to fast, to pray, and to take upon thee other afflictions, which the Church prescribes to sinners at their conversion; how wilt thou do it in thy old age, when thy body will have more need of cherishing, than of punishment? if thou find it unpleasant to resist thy sins now, and to root them out after the continuance of two, three, or four years; what will it be after twenty years more adjoin'd to them? how mad a man wouldst thou esteem him, that travelling on the way, and having great choice of lusty strong horses, should let them all go empty, and lay all the load upon some one poor and lean beast that could scarce uphold himself, and much less sustain so great a burden cast upon him? and surely no less unreasonable is that man, who passing over idly the lusty days and times of his life, reserves all the labour of doing penance for his sins, unto impotent and feeble old age, that cannot sustain it self.

The ingra-
titude to-
wards God.

But to let the folly of this deceit pass: tell me, good Christian, what ingratitude and injustice is this towards almighty God, having received so many benefits from him already, and expecting so great a reward as is the kingdom of heaven; to appoint notwithstanding the least,

least, and last, and worst part of thy life to his service; and that whereof thou art most uncertain, whether it will ever be, or whether God will accept of it when it comes. He is accursed by the Prophet, who *Mala. 1.* having whole and sound cattle, offers to God the lame, or halting part thereof. How much more shalt thou *Compari-* be accursed, who having so many days of youth, *sons.* strength, and vigour, dost appoint to God's service, only thy limping old age? in the law it was forbidden, *Deut. 25.* under a most severe threat, for any man to have two measures in his house for his neighbour, one greater for his friend, and another less for other men; and yet thou art not ashamed to use two measures of thy life, most unequal, in prejudice of thy Lord and God; whereby thou allottest to him a little, short, maim'd and uncertain time of old age; and to his enemy, the world, thou assign'st the greatest, the fairest, and surest part thereof.

O dear brother, what reason is there, why God *Unjust* should thus be used at thy hands? what law of justice *dealing* or equity is this, that after thou hast served the world, *with God.* flesh, and devil, all thy youth and best days; in the end, thou comest to offer thy old decrepit bones, defiled and worn out with sin, to thy Creator; his enemies have the best, and he the leavings; his enemies the wine, and he the lees and dregs. Dost thou not remember, that he will have the fat and best part offer'd to him? Dost thou not think of the punishment of those who offer'd the worst part of their substance to God? *Levit. 2.* Follow the counsel then of the Holy Ghost, if thou be *Numb. 18.* wise, which warns thee in these words: *Mala 1.* *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the time of affliction come, and the years approach, of which thou mayst say: they please me not.* *Eccles. 12.*

How many hast thou seen cut off before thy eyes, in the midst of their days, whilst they purposed in time to change their life? how many have come to old age it self, and yet then have felt less will of amend-

ment than before? how many have put it off, even to the very hour of death, and then least of all have remembered their own state, but have died as dumb and senseless as beasts, according to the saying of holy St. Gregory: “The sinner has also this affliction laid upon him, that when he comes to die, he forgets himself, who in his life-time did forget God?” O how many examples are seen hereof daily? how many worldly men, that have lived in sensuality, how many great sinners that have pass’d their life in wickedness, do end and die as if they went into some insensible place, where no account, no reckoning, will be demanded? They take such care in their last wills of flesh and blood, and the commodities of this world, as if they were still to live, or should have their part of these vanities when they are gone. In truth, to speak as the matter is, they die as if there was no immortality of the soul; and that truly seems to be their inward persuasion, and accordingly, is like to be their portion for all eternity afterwards.

The loss
of merit.

But suppose now that all this was not so, and that a man might as easily, commodiously, and as surely also convert himself in old age, as in youth, and that the matter was in like manner acceptable to God; yet, tell me how much time is there lost in this delay? what great treasure of merit which might have been got by labour in God’s service is neglected? If whilst the captain and other soldiers did enter into a rich city, to take the spoil, one soldier should say, I will stay, and come the next day, when all the spoil is gone; would not you think him both a coward, and also most unwise? so it is, that Christ our Saviour and all his good soldiers took the spoils of this life, enrich’d themselves with the merit of their labours; carried the same with them to heaven, and there receive eternal glory for them. And is it not a great folly and perverseness in us, to pass over this life without the gaining of any merit at all? now is the time of fight, to gain our crown;

now

A comparison.

Isaiah 3.
Ezek. 29.
Luke 11.
2 Tim. 1.
1 Peter 5.
Jac. 1.
Apoc. 12.
Luke 19.
1 Cor. 9.
Phil. 3.
2 Cor. 9.
Gal. 5.

now is the day of spoil, to seize upon our booty : now is the market, to buy the kingdom of heaven ; now is the time of running, to get the prize ; now is the day of sowing, to provide corn for the harvest that comes on. If we neglect this time, there is no more crown, no more booty, no more kingdom, no more prize, no more harvest to be lock'd for. For as the Scripture assures us. *Because of cold the slothful would not plow : he shall beg therefore in the summer, and it shall not be given him.* *Prov. 20.*

But if this consideration of gain cannot move thee, Christian reader, as it ought to do, being of such importance as it is, and irrevocable when it is once past : yet, weigh with thy self, what obligation and charge thou drawest on thee, by every day that thou deferrest thy conversion, and livest in sin. Thou makest each day knots, which thou must once undo again : thou heapest that together, which thou must disperse again, thou eatest and drinkest that hourly, which thou must once vomit up again ; I mean, if the best fall out unto thee : that is, if thou dost repent in time, and God does accept thereof, for otherwise, wo be to thee eternally, for that thou hoardest, as *St. Paul* *Rom. 2.* says, wrath and vengeance on thy head for ever. But supposing that thou receivest grace hereafter to repent, who refuses it now ; yet I say, thou must weep one day, because thou laughest now ; thou must be heartily sorry hereafter, for that wherein thou now delightest ; thou hast to bewail the day wherein thou ever gavest consent to sin, or else thy repentance will do thee no good. This thou knowest now before hand : and this thou believest now, or else thou art no true Christian. How then art thou so mad as to offend God now, both willingly and deliberately, and to continue therein, knowing that thou must once ask pardon with tears ? If thou thinkest he will pardon thee, what ingratitude is it to offend so good a Lord ? If thou thinkest he will not pardon thee, what folly can be greater than

than to offend so potent and rigorous a prince without hope of pardon, he being able to punish thee at his pleasure?

Make thy account now as thou wilt. If thou dost never repent and change thy life, then every sin thou committest, and every day that thou livest therein, is an increase of wrath and vengeance upon thee in hell, as *St. Paul* proves. If thou dost by God's mercy, for it is now not in thy hands, hereafter repent and turn, then must thou one day lament, and bewail, and do penance for this delay which thou makest.

Rom. 2.

Satisfaction
for delay.

*cap. 9.
* Supra*

*Cyprian 1.
de cap. &
1. 5. ep. 5.
ad Cornel.*

*Rom. ult.
ex 50. c. 5.*

*Ep. 5. ad
Euseb.*

*Ad virg.
Lapsam.
c. 8.*

Then must thou make satisfaction to God's justice, either in this life, or in the life to come, for that which now thou passest over so pleasantly. And this satisfaction must be so sharp and rigorous (if we believe the ancient fathers * alleged by me before to this purpose) that it must be answerable to the weight and continuance of thy sins, as more at large I shall have occasion to shew again in the second book, talking of satisfaction. So that, by how much the more thou longest, and increasest thy sin; so much the greater must be thy pain and sorrow in satisfaction. *St. Cyprian* says, A most diligent and long medicine is to be used to a deep sore; and the penance must not be less than the fault. So he. And further he shews in what order this satisfaction must be, to wit: With prayer, with tears, with watching, with lying on the ground, with wearing of hair-cloth, and the like. And conformable to this, *St. Augustine* teaches; That it is not enough to change our manners, and to leave sin, except we make satisfaction also to God for our sins past, by sorrowful penance, humble sighs, contrition of heart, and giving of alms. Our body that has lived in many delights must be afflicted, says *St. Hierom*, our long laughing must be recompenced with long weeping: our soft linnen, and fine silk-apparel, must be changed into sharp hair-cloth. Finally, *St. Ambrose* agreeing with the rest says, to a great

great wound, a deep and long medicine is needful. A great offence requires of necessity a great satisfaction.

Mark here, dear brother, that this satisfaction must be both great and long, and also of necessity. What madness is it then for thee, now to enlarge the wound, knowing that the medicine must afterwards be so painful? what cruelty can be greater against thy self, than to thrust thorns into thy own flesh, which thou must afterwards pull out again, with so many tears? wouldst thou drink that cup of poison'd liquor, for a little pleasure in the taste, which would cast thee soon after into a burning fever, torment thy bowels, and either take away thy life, or put thee in great danger thereof? Is there any madness, any fury or phrensy greater than this?

S E C T. II.

Wherein is treated of the example of the thief pardon'd upon the Cross; and how doubtful the conversion of a sinner is at his death.

BUT here now I know thy refuge will be, to allege the example of the good thief, saved even at the last hour upon the Cross, and carried to paradise that same day with Christ, without any further penance or satisfaction. Luke 13. This example is greatly noted, and urged by all those who defer their conversion; as no doubt it is, and ought to be of very great comfort to every man who finds himself now at the last extremity, and therefore commonly tempted by the enemy to despair of God's mercy, which, in no case he ought to do. For the same God who saved that great sinner at the last hour, can also, and will, save all those who heartily turn to him, even in the last hour. But, alas! many men do flatter and deceive themselves with misunderstanding, or rather misusing of this example, as they did also in the ancient times.

Circum-
stances of
the Fact.

For we must understand, [as St. *Augustine* well notes, that altho' many lay hands willingly of this consequence, yet this was but one particular act of Christ, which makes no general rule. Even as we see that a temporal prince pardons sometimes a malefactor, when he is come to the very place of execution; yet it would not be well for every malefactor, or any to trust to that. For this is but an extraordinary act of the prince's favour, and neither shew'd nor promised to all men. Besides this act was a special miracle reserved for the manifestation of Christ's power and glory, at that hour upon the Cross. Again, this act was upon a most rare confession made by the thief in that instant; when all the world forsook Christ, and even the Apostles themselves, either doubted, or lost their faith of his God-head. Besides all this, the confession of this thief was at such a time, that he could neither be baptised, nor have further time for penance, and consequently needed this dispensation. And we do hold also, that even now at a man's first conversion, there is required no other external penance, or satisfaction at all, but only to believe and to be inwardly sorry for his sins, if he be of years of discretion, and have actual sins and then to be baptised, and so pass to Heaven. But it will not be amiss, perhaps, to allege St. *Augustine's* own words upon this matter. For thus he writes:

The dis-
course of
St. *Augu-
stine* upon
the thief's
conversion.
*Serm. 120.
de Temp.*

“ It is almost an irremediable danger, when a man
“ gives himself over so much to vice, that he forgets
“ that he must give an account thereof to God. And
“ the reason why I am of this opinion, is, because it
“ is a great punishment of sin, to have lost the fear
“ and memory of God's judgment to come, &c. But
“ dearly beloved, lest perhaps, the new felicity of the
“ believing thief on the Cross, do make any of you
“ too secure and remiss; lest peradventure some of
“ you say in his heart, my guilty conscience shall not
“ trouble nor torment me; my wicked life shall not
“ make

“ make me very sad, for I see even in a moment all
 “ sins forgiven the thief: we must consider first in
 “ that thief, not only the shortness of his belief and
 “ confession, but his devotion, and the occasion of
 “ that time, even when the perfection of the just did
 “ stagger. Secondly, shew me the faith of that thief
 “ in thy self; and then promise to thy self his felicity.
 “ The devil puts in thy head this security, to the
 “ end he bring thee to perdition, And it is impossible
 “ to number all them who have perish’d by the shadow
 “ of this deceitful hope. He deceives himself, and
 “ makes but a jest of his own damnation, who per-
 “ severing in sin, thinks that God’s mercy at the last
 “ day will help or relieve him. It is hateful before
 “ God, when a man, upon confidence of penance in
 “ his old age, sins the more freely. The happy thief
 “ whereof we have spoken (happy I say, not because
 “ he laid snares in the way, but because he took hold
 “ of the way it self in *CHRIST*) laying hands on
 “ the prey of life, and after a strange manner, making
 “ a booty of his own death; he, I say, neither did
 “ defer the time of his salvation wittingly, or deceit-
 “ fully put off the remedy to the last moment of his
 “ life, neither did he desperately reserve the hope of
 “ his redemption to the hour of his death; neither
 “ had he any knowledge of religion, or of *CHRIST*,
 “ before that time. For if he had, perhaps he wou’d not
 “ have been the last in number among the Apostles,
 “ which was the first of all in the kingdom of hea-
 “ ven.” So he.

Note this
 attentively,
 reader.

And by these words of St. *Augustine*, we are admoni-
 sh’d, as you see, that this particular fact of Christ makes
 no general rule of remission to all men: not because Christ
 is not always ready to receive the penitent, as he pro-
 mises, as he was to receive the thief; but because every
 man has not the time or grace to repent, as he should
 at the last hour, according as has been declared be-
 fore. The general way that God proposes to all, is

The gene-
 ral way.

- 2 Cor 11. that which St. Paul says, of all men whose end shall be according to their works. Look how they live, and so they die. To that effect says the Prophet.
- Psalms 61. *Once has God spoke, these two things have I heard: that power is God's, and mercy O Lord is to thee, because thou wilt render to every one according to his works.* The wise man makes this plain, saying, *The way of sinners is paved with stones, and in their end hell, and darkness, and pains.* Finally St. Paul makes this general and remarkable conclusion and admonition: *Be not deceived, God is not mock'd: for what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that sows in his flesh, of the flesh shall he reap corruption: but he that sows in the spirit, of the spirit, shall reap life everlasting.* In which words he also does not only lay down to us the universal rule, whereunto we must trust, to wit, that men must expect good for good, and evil for evil; but also says further, that to persuade our selves the contrary thereof, were to mock and abuse both God and our selves.
- Eccles. 21.
- Gal. 6.

That the
conversion
made at the
last day is
doubtful,
and why.

Notwithstanding, this general law as I have said, bars not the mercy of almighty God, from using a privilege in regard of some particular men, even at the very last. But yet miserable is that soul, which places the anchor of her eternal happiness or misery, upon so uncertain a point as this is. I call it uncertain, because commonly all divines, who have writ of this matter, speak very doubtfully of the penance or conversion of a man, at the last hour. And altho' they do not absolutely evacuate the same, but do leave it, as uncertain, to God's secret judgment, yet they incline to the negative part, alleging sundry strong reasons and proofs of the same. And a very learned man of our age, taking upon him to discuss this question, begins his treatise in these words. The subject brings with it more fear, than matter of doubt; as if he would say, that there is little or no doubt at all. Yet he sets down two Catholick conclusions about the matter: the first,

Sotus in 1.4.
Sent 9. 19.
art. 6.

That

That at what time soever a man turns truly to God by penance, he will be received, and his sins pardon'd ; as is evident by the promise of almighty God in *Ezekiel*: That whatsoever day a sinner shall turn from his wickedness, his sins shall not hurt him, &c. And further also, that a sinner may at all times during his life, being in his right senses, and having the use of free-will assisted by God's grace, turn by repentance, unto almighty God. *Ezek. 33.*

But yet, he sets down a farther proposition thus: The second conclusion of final conversion.
 " That the penance or turning to God, in him that
 " defers the same to the last end of his life, is not
 " secure, nor ought to yield much confidence of par-
 " don ; especially in such as have led naughty lives,
 " except a man should feel very great and extraordinary
 " compunction at that instant." The reasons are, because such men having increased God's wrath against them, by their long abusing his patience, when he expected them to penance, as *St. Paul* says ; do thereby shew themselves most unworthy of his grace, which is necessary to their true conversion. Whereupon it follows, that it may justly be doubted, whether this their shew of repentance and conversion at the last hour is true or no : to wit, whether it is sorrow for their sins, as they are an offence of God, or whether it is for fear of punishment in the next life, or grief to lose this world, or the like.

And another great divine who lived above four hundred years before this, has these words to the same effect: " It is very hard, says he, that the penance
 " of him that is at the hour of death, should be true
 " penance, seeing it comes so late : for when the
 " parts of our body are tormented with pains, and our
 " senses oppress'd therewith, it is hard for a man to
 " think upon any other thing. Wherefore this kind
 " of conversion ought to be suspected of us, as
 " coming by coercion, not by free-will. And altho'
 " a man may think at that hour, that he is desirous to
 " leave

Hugo de St. Victore
l. 2. de Sacr.
part 14.
cap. 5.

“ leave sin, yet he may easily be deceived therein. So
 “ he:” putting it in doubt, as you see, whether our
 penance at the last day is voluntary, or rather forced,
 and so not meritorious.

*Aug. Serm.
 48. ad fratres
 in Eremo.*

*St. Augustine's
 discourse of
 the miserable
 death of those
 that defer
 their conversion
 until the last
 hour.*

But yet St. *Augustine* does more particularly express
 this matter in a Sermon of his, in these words: “ When
 “ you shall be in your last sickness, my brethren, O
 “ how hard and difficult a thing will it be, how pain-
 “ ful how lamentable for you to repent, and to be
 “ sorry, as well for the evils which you have committed,
 “ as for the good things you have omitted. And
 “ why will this be so hard to you in that day, but
 “ because all the attention of mind will be drawn thi-
 “ ther, where the greatest force of your grief is:
 “ Many impediments also will occur to your heart in
 “ that hour, to hinder you from doing penance. For
 “ your body will be replenish'd with grief, and alto-
 “ gether afflicted with pain, death will draw near and
 “ terrify. And when worldly fathers will see their
 “ children enter, whom they have so much loved, and
 “ for whose cause, perhaps, they will think themselves
 “ going towards their damnation, with how lamenta-
 “ ble an eye will they behold them? Their wives sit
 “ by weeping; the world gives still hope that they may
 “ escape, the devil dissuades them from penance, &c.
 “ O man, hast thou heard what I have told thee? be-
 “ lieve thou, that shortly thou shalt prove all these
 “ things in thy own person. Wherefore I beseech
 “ thee to fall to penance, before thou be sick, dispose
 “ of thy house, make thy testament, do that which is
 “ to be done, whilst thou art in health, whilst thou
 “ art wise, whilst thou art thy own, &c.” So St. *Au-*
 “ *gustine* to those who will follow his counsel.

And in like sense St. *Isidore* who lived not long after
 him, after a large and effectual exhortation to all Chri-
 stians, not to delay their conversion, and recon-
 ciliation to God by penance, but to do it out of hand,
 whilst they are young, strong, and in health, which
 he

he calls the sure way of salvation ; he sets down this terrible conclusion for such as are delayers, &c. “ He that living wickedly repents only, when he is in peril of death, as his damnation is uncertain, so is his pardon doubtful. Wherefore he that desires to be sure of pardon in his health, he must repent and bewail his sins in his health. There are some men that quickly promise security to them that repent, of which people God says by *Jeremiah* the Prophet :” *Jerem. 6.* *They cured the destruction of the daughter of my people with ignominy, saying, peace, peace, and there was no peace.* “ They did cure the contrition of God’s people with ignominy, for they did promise security to sinners, without doing a sufficient penance.” Hitherto *St. Isidore.* Who in his last words, as you see, insinuates, that penance done at the last day, is not sure of pardon : for we cannot be sure, whether it be true and sufficient, or no. Which if you remember was one of the chief reasons set down by school divines before ; whereunto they add two others of great consideration : the first, that altho’ we were certain, that God at the last hour, would always give us pardon for our sins : yet it would be a great indignity to rely upon that, because God created us not in this world, to offend him, and then to ask forgiveness, but for another far higher end, to wit, as the Holy Ghost by the mouth of *Zachary* utter’d, *Luke 1.* *That without fear being deliver’d from the hand of our enemies, we may serve him in holiness and justice, before him all our days.* Which we cannot do, having once offended him after baptism, except we return to him by penance, and begin a good life. And consequently till we do this, we perform nothing of that, for which we were created, but do live in his disgrace and offence, increasing the same against us daily.

St. Isidore.
lib. de sum-
mo bono
cap. 13.

Jerem. 6.

Two other
reasons of
school-di-
vines.

Luke 1.

The second reason follows from that first, and is, that whereas we cannot serve God in holiness of life, nor love or honour him as we should, except, first by penance, we convert our selves and return unto him ; hence Ponder well this reason.

Rom. 2.
See Suarez
p. 3. q. 90.
art. 4.

hence it ensues, that this conversion is not only necessary, but obligatory also in such sort, that by deferring the same long, we incur new sins, and thereby multiply God's wrath against us, conformably to the doctrine of St. Paul before mention'd to the *Romans*. And this point school divines demonstrate by many strong and evident arguments, altho, the time when precisely it binds, and how often, is not so easy to determine, but to be left to good mens judgments, and consciences; but certainly cannot be deferred to the hour of death. Which they shew among other proofs, by the example of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity: for as it would be most absurd to defer their acts to the end of his life, that is, to defer to believe, hope, and love God, till death: so is it also absurd to defer one's conversion; seeing this is no less necessary to a Christian life, and to the exercise thereof, than the other. And by this a sinner may conceive what he does in deferring his conversion from day to day; to wit, he multiplies and aggravates his own sins: he confirms himself in God's displeasure, increases God's vengeance which hangs over him, loses all occasion of merit and good works, performs nothing of that for which he was created, enjoys no benefit of his being a Christian, and disposes himself daily to more certain and greater damnation.

Cyp. Episl.
52. Edit.
Pamæi.

St. Cyprian
rejects
them
which re-
turn not to
God, but at
the hour of
death.

In respect of which unworthy proceeding, it is presumed, that the holy father and martyr of God St. Cyprian, did pronounce that severe sentence, to the *B. Antonianus*: "Therefore, dear brother, such as do no penance, nor testify by the manifest profession of their tears, the hearty sorrow which they have for their sins, we do judge them to be barr'd from all hope of communion and peace with us, yea, altho' they should humbly desire the same in their sickness and peril of death: because it is to be presumed, that they do not so much repent themselves of their sins, out of a true sorrow as out of fear of
" imminent

“ imminent death, which compels them to be suppliant
 “ at that hour. But he is not worthy to receive comfort
 “ at his death, who in his health would not think that
 “ he was to die.” Thus far *St. Cyprian* : whose cen-
 sure and decree, tho’ it may seem somewhat hard, and
 has been moderated since that time by some later pastors
 of God’s Church, who have appointed that absolution
 and communion be not denied to them that demand the
 same with humility, at the Church’s hand, tho’ it be
 at the hour of death, leaving the rest to God’s secret
 judgments, yet we may see by this, and by much more,
 that is to be found in the writings of holy fathers;
 how doubtful they were of the success of such conver-
 sions, as are made only at the last day, when death
 draws near.

*Leo 1.
 Epist. 89.
 & Cælest. 1.
 Epist. 2.
 ad Ep. sc.
 Galliæ.*

St. Augustine’s words are terrible in one of his homi-
 lies, where he says, the penance which is demanded
 by a sick man (to wit, to be confess’d and absolv’d of
 his sins) is sick and weak also of it self; but that which
 is demanded by him who lies a dying, I am afraid lest
 it die in like manner with him : that is to say, lest it
 profit him little by reason of his delay. And in another
 place the holy father goes yet further, saying : He is
 far enough from faith, that expects the time of his
 old age to do penance, and to turn to God. And how
 deeply ought this to move any man that has a conscience,
 to look to himself?

*Aug. Serm.
 57. de Temp.*

*Aug. Serm.
 71. ad fra-
 tres in E-
 rema.*

But here, perhaps, some man astonish’d with the
 severity of these speeches of the ancient fathers, may ask,
 what is then to be done when a man finds himself at
 the last hour, unreconciled to God and his Church.
 Whereunto I answer, that in no case he ought to de-
 spair, but remembring rather that which has been laid
 down by me at large, in the second part of this book,
 concerning the infinite mercies of God, above all his
 other works (which chapter he may read, or cause to
 be read to him for his comfort) he must cry heartily
 to him for pardon, and to his Church for absolution,
 and

*Supra par-
 te 2. cap. 1.*

and so much the more, by how much longer he has by negligence deferr'd his conversion: which if it is hearty, true, and sincere at this time, no doubt but almighty God will most certainly accept thereof. And all the doubt which the holy fathers do make of this acceptance, is, lest the said conversion be not sincere, and therefore they leave it doubtful. Of which doubtful case, you shall for a final conclusion hear the sentence and resolution of *St. Augustine* at large, and therewith we will end this point.

*Hom. 41.
ex 50.*
The resolution of
St. Augustine about
the doubtfulness of
final conversion.

Thus then writes that holy man, after much deliberation upon the matter: " Therefore he that has
" done penance truly, and so shall die (being absolved
" from the bonds wherewith he was tied, and separated from the body of *CHRIST*) he goes to
" rest. But if a man in the extream necessity of his
" sickness, do desire to receive penance, and do pass
" hence reconciled; I confess unto you, that we do
" not deny him that which he demands, but yet we
" presume not that he goes hence in a good state. I do
" not presume, I tell you plainly, I do not presume.
" A faithful man that has lived well, goes away securely.
" He that dies the same hour he was baptized, goes
" hence securely. He that is reconciled in his health,
" and does penance, and afterwards lives well, goes
" hence securely. But he that is reconciled, and does
" penance at the last end, I am not secure that he goes
" hence securely. Where I am secure, I do tell you,
" and do give security; and where I am not secure, I
" may give penance, but I can give no security. But
" here perhaps, some man will say to me, good priest,
" if you know not in what state a man goes hence, nor
" can give security that he is saved, to whom penance
" was assign'd at his death; teach us, I beseech you,
" how we must live after our conversion and penance.
" I say unto you, abstain from drunkenness, from
" concupiscence of the flesh, from theft; from much
" babbling, from immoderate laughter, from idle words,
" for

“ for which men are to give an account in the day of
 “ judgment. Lo, how small things I have named in
 “ your sight ; but yet, all these are great matters, and *Mat. 12.*
 “ pestilent to those who commit them. Nay yet, I
 “ tell you further ; a man must not only abstain from
 “ these vices, and the like, after penance done, but
 “ also before, when he is in health. For if he puts
 “ it off to the last end of his life, he cannot tell whe-
 “ ther he will be able to receive penance, and to con-
 “ fess his sins to God, and to the priest, or no. Be-
 “ hold the cause why I say to you, that a man should
 “ live well before penance, and after penance, better.”
 Thus *St. Augustine*, who continues yet further in the
 same discourse, in these ensuing words.

“ Mark well, says he, what I speak, and perhaps
 “ it will be needful to expound my meaning more
 “ plainly, lest any man mistake me. What say I then ?
 “ that this man who repents at the end shall be damn’d ?
 “ I do not say so. What then ? do I say he shall
 “ be saved ? no. What then do I say ? I say, I know
 “ not ; I say, I presume not : I promise not : I know
 “ not. Wilt thou deliver thy self from this doubt,
 “ escape this dangerous and uncertain point ? do pe-
 “ nance then whilst thou art whole. For if thou dost
 “ penance whilst thou art in health, and the last day
 “ chance to come upon thee, run presently to be recon-
 “ ciled, and so doing, thou art safe. And why art
 “ thou safe ? because thou didst penance in that time
 “ wherein thou mightest have sinn’d. But if thou wilt
 “ do penance then, when thou canst sin no longer,
 “ thou leavest not sin, but sin leaves thee. But you
 “ will say to me, how know you, whether God will
 “ forgive a man’s sins at the last hour, or no ? you
 “ say very well, I know it not. For if I knew that
 “ penance would not profit a man at the last hour, I
 “ would not give it him. Again, if I knew that it
 “ would deliver him, I would not warn you, I would
 “ not terrify you, as I do. Two things there are in
 “ this

The con-
 tinuance of
*St. Augu-
 stine’s* dis-
 course of
 the danger
 of delay.

A notable
saying of
St. *Augu-
stine*.

“ this matter ; either God pardons a man, doing pe-
“ nance at the hour of death, or he does not pardon
“ him. Which of those two will be, I know not.
“ Wherefore, if thou be wise, take that which is cer-
“ tain, and let go the uncertain.” Hitherto are St. *Augu-
stine*’s words of the doubtful case of those who do pe-
nance at the last day.

Many
perish ever-
lastingly
by delay.

And here I would have the careful Christian to con-
sider with me this one point. If they that repent
and do penance, at the last day, do pass hence not-
withstanding, in such dangerous doubtfulness, as St. *Augu-
stine* shews, what ought we to think of all such who
want either time, or ability, or will, or place, or means,
or grace to do any penance at all, at that hour ? what
must we say of all those who die suddenly ? who are
struck dumb, or senseless, as many are ? what shall
we say of those that are abandon’d by God, and given
over to vice, even to the last breath ? I have shew’d

2 Cor. 11.

before out of St. *Paul*, that ordinarily sinners die,
according as they live. So that it is a singular privi-
lege for a wicked man to be permitted to do penance at
his death : and then if his penance is so doubtful as
St. *Augustine* has declared, what a dismal case are all
others in ? I mean, the greatest part, who repent not at
all, but die as they lived, and are forsaken by almighty
God in that extremity, according to his threats, when
he says, *Because I call’d and you refused : I stretch’d
out my hand and there was none that regarded. You
have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my
reprehensions. I also will laugh in your destruction,
and will scorn when that shall come to you which you
feared. When sudden calamity shall fall on you and
destruction as a tempest shall be at hand : when tribu-
lation and distress shall come upon you. Then shall
they invoke me and I will not bear : in the morning
shall they arise and shall not find me.*

Prov. 1.

A dreadful
saying.

This is both dreadful and lamentable which the Pro-
phet says of such as defer their conversion from time to
time.

time. *They will return at evening, and they shall suffer famine, as dogs; and shall compass the city.* The words that go immediately before, and do immediately follow, express more plainly the greatness of this threat. For the verse before is, *God of Israel, attend to visit all nations: have no mercy on all that work iniquity.* That is, who work iniquity to the end, without change. And immediately after ensues, *Behold they will speak in their mouth, and a sword in their lips, because who has heard? and thou; O Lord, wilt scorn them.* That is to say, these men in their last extremity will cry for help, and their cry will be as sharp to pierce mens ears, as a sword is; and yet notwithstanding, no man will hear them. And thou, O Lord, who only canst help them, wilt be so far from hearing or pitying their case, that thou shalt also laugh at their misery and destruction. By all which, is signified the great calamity of such as defer their conversion to the last day, express'd by three circumstances, alleged in the former sentence.

For first, he says, *They will return at the evening;* Turning to
God at the
evening. that is, at the hour of death. For as the evening is the end of the day, and the beginning of night; so is this time the end of light, and the beginning of all darkness to the wicked. In which sense Christ said, *I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day. The night comes when no man can work.* John 9. At this time then, that is, at this evening, in this twilight, between day and darkness, when the pleasant brightness and heat of all sun-beams is past; the brightness, I mean, of worldly pomp is consumed; when the heat of concupiscence, of carnal love, of pleasures, is quench'd; when the beautiful summer-day of this life is ended, and the boisterous winter-night of death draws on; then, says the Prophet, will the wicked man begin perforce to turn to God; then will he repent; then will he resolve on his conversion.

Final turning to God not accepted.

Psal. 58.

But what, will this be accepted? you have heard the Prophet's request to God, *Have no mercy on all that work iniquity.* Not because the Prophet wishes God to be unmerciful; but because he well knew God's immutable justice towards such kind of men, as turn to him only at the evening. Whose misery in this extremity, he expresses further, by saying, *They shall suffer famine as dogs, and shall compass the city:* signifying their great and inestimable distress by the hunger and howling of those creatures; and by the second, their pitiful solicitude in seeking comfort from all that are within the circuit of God's city or Church, but shall find none. For whether will they turn themselves in this distress? unto their wordly wealth, power or riches? alas, they are no more, and the Scripture tells us that, *Riches shall not profit in the day of revenge.* Will they turn unto their carnal friends? but what comfort can they give, but unavailing tears and comfortless mourning? will they ask help of the Saints in heaven, that they may pray for them in this instant? they cannot chuse but remember what is written. *The Saints shall rejoice in glory --- The exaltations of God in their throat: and two edged swords in their hands. To do revenge in the nations, chastisements among the people. To bind their kings in fetters, and their nobles in manacles. That they may do in them the judgment that is written: This glory is to all his Saints.* Their only refuge then must be to God, who indeed is the only sure refuge of all. But in these circumstances he will not hear them, as we have said before, but rather contemn and laugh at their misery. Not that he will act contrary to his promise of receiving the sinner at whatsoever time he repents, and turns from his impiety: but because this death-bed repentance is seldom true and sincere.



S E C T. III.

*Containing sundry examples of the same matter,
worthy to be noted.*

WHEREFORE to draw towards an end, concerning this subject of delay, what wise man is there in the world, who reading this, will not fear the deferring of his conversion, tho' it were but for one day? who knows whether this will not be the last day in which God will call him? God says, *Because I call'd, and you refused I stretch'd out my hand, and there was none that regarded --- I also will laugh in your destruction.* He does not say how many times, or how long he did call and hold out his hand. God says, *I stand at the door and knock*, but says not how often he does that, or how many knocks he gives. Again, he said of wicked *Jezabel*, the feign'd prophetess in the *Apocalypse*, That he has given her a time to do penance, and she would not, and therefore she should perish: but he says not, how long this time for repentance lasted. We read of wonderful examples concerning this subject. *Herod* the father, had a call given him, and that a loud one, when *St. John Baptist* was sent to him, and when his heart was so far touch'd that he willingly heard him, and follow'd his counsel in many things, as one of the *Evangelists* notes. But yet, because he deferr'd the matter, and took not time, when it was offer'd, he was cast off again, and his last doings made worse than his former. *Herod* the tetrarch his son, had a call also, when he felt that desire to see *Christ*, and some miracles done by him; but because he answer'd not to the call, it did him no good, but rather much hurt. What a great call had *Pilate* given him, if he had been so fortunate as to have hearken'd to it presently, when he was made to understand the innocency of *Christ*, as appears by washing his hands

What danger is in delay.

Prov. 1.

Apoc. 2.

*Herod the first.
Mark 6.*

*Herod the second.
Luke 11.
Luke 23.
Mat. 14.
Pilate.
Mat. 27.*

in testimony thereof, and his wife's sending to him, to mind him of it? No less a call had king *Agrippa*, when he cried out upon hearing of *St. Paul*; *A little thou persuadest me to become a Christian*. But because he deferr'd the matter, this motion pass'd away again.

Agrippa.
Acts 26.

Pharaoh.
Exod. 9.

Twice happy had *Pharaoh* been, if he had resolved himself presently, upon that motion he felt, when he cried to *Moses*, *I have sinn'd, and God is just*. But by delay he became worse than ever he was before.

Felix.

St. Luke reports how *Felix* governor of *Jury* for the *Romans*, conferr'd secretly oftentimes with *St. Paul*, that was his prisoner, and heard of him the faith of Christ, wherewith he was greatly moved; especially at one time, when *St. Paul* disputed of God's justice, of chastity, and of the day of judgment before him, and *Drusilla* his wife that was a *Jew*, whereat *Felix* trembled. But yet he deferr'd this resolution, bidding *Paul* to depart, and to come again another time; and so it all, by delay, came to no effect. How many men perish daily, some cut off by death, some left by God and given over to a reprobate sense; who might have saved themselves, if they had not deferr'd their conversion from day to day, but had taken their resolution presently, when they felt God to call within their hearts? and this may be witnessed by daily examples which we our selves have seen or heard of in *England*, of such who having had, or pretended good desires to make this resolution, and amend their past lives, have deferr'd it so long that their deaths have been miserable, either by senseless or careless behaviour therein.

The danger of putting the day of our vocation.

Almighty God is ready and bountiful to call us; but he binds himself to no time or space; but comes and goes at his pleasure. And they who take not time when offer'd, are inexcusable before his justice, and do not know whether ever it will be offer'd to them again, or no. For this thing is in the will and knowledge of God alone, who takes mercy where it pleases him, and is bound to none. And when the prefix'd time of call-

ing

ling is once past, woe be to that party; for a thousand worlds will not purchase it again. Christ shews wonderfully the importance of this matter; when, entering into *Jerusalem* upon *Palm-sunday*, amidst all the mirth and glory of his triumph, he could not chuse but weep upon that city, considering this was the last day of mercy and vocation that should be given to the same. And therefore he says with tears: *If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that appertain to thy peace: but now they are hidden from thy eyes.* As if he had said, if thou knewest, *Jerusalem*, as well as I do, what mercy is offer'd thee, even this day, which is the last that ever such an offer will be made, thou wouldst presently accept thereof. But now this secret judgment of my Father is hidden from thee, and therefore thou makest little account thereof, till destruction comes suddenly upon thee. And soon after it did, for not full forty years after our Saviour's passion, the said city of *Jerusalem* was besieged, taken, ransack'd, burnt, and overthrown by the *Roman* emperors, *Vespasian* and his son *Titus*, according to the prophecy of our Saviour in the Gospel, and above eleven hundred thousand slain therein, if we believe *Josephus* the learned *Jewish* historiographer that was present at that siege, and writ the history, and above fourscore and seventeen thousand taken alive and put to slavery. And during the siege it self, they were reduced to such extream misery, that mothers eat their own children; and this for delaying their repentance, and not answering God's call, nor accepting the time offer'd by him. An example of God's justice, the most famous and admirable, perhaps, that ever happen'd in the world, upon one nation and city; and is recorded for such in the writings, not only of the hebrew and Christians, but in like manner of heathen writers; *Tacitus*, *Suetonius*, *Dio*, *Phlegon*, and others, that have left written the lives of the emperors *Vespasian* and *Titus*.

Rom. 9.

Luke 21.

*Luke 29
& 31.*

*Joseph. l. 5. de bello
Judaico
c. 1, 2, 4,
28. & l. 7.
c. 28.*

*Tacit. l. 5.
hist. Sueton.
Plut. Dio.
in chron. in
vita Vesp.*

And because this subject is of great and singular importance, and handled often, and more earnestly by the ancient holy fathers of God's Church to the Christians of their time, I shall not think it unprofitable nor ungrateful to the reader, to entertain him yet a little further with the recital of some sayings, arguments, reasons, and exhortations used by the said fathers, to warn men of this dangerous deceit of delay in their conversion. St. *Basil* uses this speech in one of his homilies: " This is the greatest care of our adversary
 " the devil, to persuade us that we offer the present
 " day to his service, and to-morrow to God's; and
 " when to-morrow comes, to do the same, for that it
 " is also present, and so by delay, death coming instead
 " of to-morrow, we are sent to hell for an over late
 " repentance."

*Basil. hom.
de Baptis.*

And the same father in another place, after an earnest exhortation not to defer our conversion till our old age, but presently in our youth to turn to God, and begin a new life, concludes thus: " Let the last day be always
 " before thy eyes, and when thou dost rise in the morn-
 " ing, be doubtful whether thou shalt arrive at the
 " evening; and when thou liest down upon thy bed
 " at night, presume not on a security, that thou shalt
 " live to see the Sun return to shine upon thee again." So he, against delay and procrastination in our conversion.

*Basil. in
admoni-
tione ad
filium spi-
ritualem.
Tom. 2.
An admo-
tion worth
the noting.*

St. *Augustine* who had experienced the danger of this deceit in himself before his conversion, as we have already said, handles this point in many places, with much fervour and feeling, and more at length. For having in his books of confessions, accused himself to almighty God of these delays, he reports that he said among other things: My answerings to God's call, that now, even now I will convert, had no measure or end, and *let me alone a little*, grew out in great length. But in the end, he broke off all delays, and received such infinite consolation thereby, that he could never have imagin'd

*Aug. l. 8.
conf. c. 5.*

imagin'd it before, nor remember afterwards, without infinite gratitude and thanks to almighty God for the same. "How sweet, O Lord, was it made to me

Lib. 9.

"presently, says he, to be deprived of those treasures

Conf. c. 1.

"of the world, which before I was afraid that I should

"want; thou didst cast them out from me, O true

"and highest sweetness; thou, I say, didst cast them

St. Augustine's com-

"out, and didst enter in their place, who are more

fort after

"sweet than all pleasures, and sweetness it self, &c."

his conver-

Thus he, of the comfort of his own resolution, when

sion.

he turn'd to God, and began a virtuous life in his youth.

But when speaking to others he handled this subject

of delay, he was ordinarily very earnest, as well know-

ing the importance thereof; and some examples we will

set down in this place. "What is so full of longani-

Aug. expl.

"mity, what is so full of mercy, as the proceeding

in Paul

"of almighty God with sinners? men sin, and yet

120.

"are suffer'd to live; they increase their sins, and their

"lives are enlarged: they blaspheme God daily, and

"he makes his Sun to rise upon them, as well the bad

"as the good; he calls them every way to amendment;

"he calls, by giving them time of longer life; he calls,

"by reading of good books; he calls by hearing of

"sermons; he calls, by inward inspirations; he calls, by

"the whips of correction; he calls, by the mercy and

"sweetness of spiritual consolation: how great is the

"longanimity and mercy of this God? but take heed,

"thou abuse not this longanimity, lest, as the Apostle

"says, thou heapest to thy self, his ireful wrath, in

"the day of revenge and just judgment. He would

Rom. 2.

"by this longanimity bring thee to repentance, and to

"change thy life, but thou sayest every day: let this

"day pass, and to-morrow we shall think of it; and

"when to-morrow comes, thou sayest, that shall not

"be the last, and so do pass to the third day: and

Eccles. 5.

"suddenly comes upon thee the wrath of God; for as

A remark-

"the wise man says. When by deferring thy conver-

able saying

"sion, thou hast heap'd to thy self his wrath, in the

of St. Au-

gustine.

“ day of vengeance, thou shalt feel him just, whom
 “ thou contemnest in his longanimity.”

Aug. Ser.

59. de ver-
bis Dom.

apud Joan.

Mat. 20.

Ibid.

He that is
 call'd must
 come pre-
 sently and
 not delay.

This same father and doctor has another discourse in a sermon of his, upon the parable of the husbandman, that call'd labourers into his vinyard at the first, third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hour, and every one of them had their hire at the end of the day, as Christ our Saviour does declare, in St. *Matthew's* Gospel. Which St. *Augustine* applies to the different vocations of men to God's service; some in their infancy, some in their youth, some in their middle age, and some in their later years, and some at the very end of their lives, which is the literal meaning of that most excellent parable. But let us hear St. *Augustine's* notable discourse, and exhortation thereupon: “ Stand, attend
 “ my brethren, says he, and let no man linger, or
 “ delay to come presently, and labour in this vinyard,
 “ being sure that whensoever he comes, he will have
 “ his penny, as well as the rest. But tho' it is true,
 “ he is sure to have his penny when he has labour'd;
 “ yet he must not defer his coming; nor did any of
 “ those that were call'd at the first, or third hour, say
 “ to the husbandman, expect we will come at the sixth,
 “ or ninth, or eleventh hour. When thou art call'd,
 “ come presently, for the reward is equally promised to
 “ all. Art thou call'd at the sixth hour? come quickly,
 “ for thou knowest not whether thou wilt live to the se-
 “ venth hour, and wherefore then dost thou put off him
 “ that calls thee, seeing thou art sure of his reward, but
 “ not sure of the day or hour, which he will allow thee
 “ to come in. Take heed lest thou deprive thy self by
 “ deferring, of that, which he has promised thee by his
 “ calling.” So he.

Ezek. 18.

And in the same discourse a little after, he answers the objection of negligent people out of the speech of God, by *Ezekiel* the Prophet in these words: “ If whensoever,
 “ I shall be converted, says the negligent wordling,
 “ almighty God who is merciful, will forget all my
 “ iniquities,

“ iniquities, why then should I convert my self rather
 “ to-day than to-morrow? whereunto *St. Augustine*
 “ answers in these words. Thou sayest, my brother,
 “ that to-morrow thou wilt be converted, and that
 “ to-morrow will be the end of all thy iniquities, but *Ezek. 18.*
 “ how knowest thou whether the end of thy life will *An objec-*
 “ not be before to-morrow? thou dost well in rejoicing, *tion of the*
 “ that whensoever thou shalt be converted, God will *negligent*
 “ forgive thee thy iniquities; but thou hast no promise *answer by*
 “ of God that thou shalt live till to-morrow. For *St. augu-*
 “ which cause the holy Scripture counsels thee another *stine.*
 “ thing: Be not slow to convert thy self to God, nor
 “ defer the same from day to day, for God’s wrath
 “ comes upon the sudden, and in time of revenge he
 “ will destroy thee. Wherefore do not defer, my bro- *Eccles. 5.*
 “ ther, do not shut that gate against thy self which God
 “ has open’d: behold the giver of pardon opens the
 “ door to thee, why dost thou defer to enter? thou
 “ shouldst rejoice with all thy heart, if he had open’d
 “ the same at thy knock, and yet he has open’d, and
 “ wilt thou remain without? It is written in the Scrip- *Rom. 3.*
 “ ture of the works of mercy: say not to thy friend,
 “ go and return, to-morrow I will give you, whereas
 “ thou mayst give forthwith. Thou hast heard the
 “ precept of not deferring to be merciful to others,
 “ and wilt thou by deferring, be cruel to thy self?
 “ thou must not defer the giving of bread, and wilt thou
 “ defer the receiving of pardon for thy sins? be mer-
 “ ciful to thy own soul; bestow this alms upon her,
 “ and do not say, that thou givest any thing to her of
 “ thy own, but do not repel the hand of him that offers
 “ to give her so great an alms as is the remission of all
 “ her sins by speedy repentance, which thou goest
 “ about to evacuate by delay?” Thus far *St. Au-*
guftine, whose words ought to weigh much with any
 discreet reader.

The great and ancient doctor *Origen* that was father
 and master of so many martyrs, handles this argument
 otherwise,

otherwise, but yet very largely upon those words of *Jeremiah* the Prophet: *We have cured Babylon, and she is not heal'd; let us forsake her, and let us go every one to his own land, because her judgment has reach'd even to the heavens.* Which speech *Origen* applies to the Angels, when they are sent by almighty God to procure the conversion of a sinful soul, understood here, says he, by *Babylon*, in regard of the confusion, and disorder of her unlawful appetites, contrary oftentimes, the one to the other. Which soul the said Angels taking upon them to cure, and procuring many motives, as well external as internal, to stir her up to repentance, and change of life: if in the end she remains obstinate, or loses the time by trifling from day to day: what can the good Angels do, says *Origen*, or say more, than what is here set down by the Prophet? we have gone about to cure this *Babylon*, this miserable soul, replenish'd with confusion of sin, and worldly vanities; we have applied what remedies we could; we have expected long, and effected little; at length her judgment is past from us to the heavens, and from thence will come the sentence; let us be gone each one to his own home. Which words being once utter'd, continues *Origen*: their departure is thy damnation, as being incorrigible; because thou wilt not be cured. And then he makes this conclusion; and exhortation. "Beware
 " thou man, lest the physician sent thee by God (whether he be an Angel or what man soever that labours
 " with thee for thy salvation, and for the curing of thy
 " soul) abandon and leave thee: for if he does, thou
 " art in a desperate case." So *Origen*, in those early days of the primitive Church; and his warning ought much to be weigh'd by those that weary out so many spiritual physicans (sent them by God, as they with reason may imagine, seeing they seek nothing but the curing of their souls;) and send them away afflicted, and discontented, because *Babylon* will not be cured; and so their judgment passes up to heaven, and God
 calls

Orig. hom.
3. Jer. 51.

The curing
 of *Babylon*
 what it
 means.

Ibid.

calls the cause of their condemnation to his own tribunal, by reason of their obstinate lingring, and delaying their conversion, from day to day.

And conformably to this: St. *Hierom* in his questions upon *Genesis* notes, that almighty God seems sometimes as it were, to lose his patience with such people. And so when he had said that he would give them a hundred and twenty years for repentance before the flood of *Noah*, and premonish'd them, by the building of the ark, when the flood drew near: seeing that in a hundred years, wherein the ark was built, none would repent, he cut off the last twenty years, and brought in the deluge at the end of the said hundred, and did so take his grace from them all, that of so huge a multitude of mankind, as then must be presumed to have been upon the face of the earth, only eight souls were saved in that ark, as the Scripture recounts, because the rest of mankind could not be brought to repentance, tho' they heard *Noah* and his children continually threatning an universal deluge, and saw them build their ark to avoid the same. A strange example of God's justice against such as neglect his call, or defer to follow it from day to day: For in the end they come to be senseless, and to feel or care for nothing, according to the saying of *Seneca* the philosopher, who puts this difference between the sickness of the body, and sickness of the mind: That sickness of the body, the greater it is, the more painful and sensible it is, and the more complain'd of by the patient; but the diseases of our minds, the greater they are, the less they are felt, and least complain'd of by us. As for example: the more proud or presumptuous a man is, the less he perceives or mislikes the same: and so in other maladies of the mind. And generally the more full of sins and infirmities a soul is, she is the less sensible of it, because the malady it self takes away or diminishes her sense and feeling; so that as the wise man says, *The*

Hier. l. quest. in Gen.

A strange example of those who perish'd in the flood of *Noah*.

Gen. 6. 14

*Luke 7.
Heb. 11.
1 Pet. 3.*

Senec. in Sentent.

The difference between the sickness of the body and of the mind.

impious

Prov. 18. impious when he shall come into the depth of sins contemns.
That is, has no scruple or feeling, or conscience at all, which is an ordinary effect of negligent delay in our amendment.

Which deep and dreadful point the divine father St. Gregory does excellently discuss, shewing how one sin by delaying repentance draws on another, so that it becomes at length, not only a sin in it self, but both the cause and punishment of other sins also, and thereby draws to the depth, whereof we have spoken. You shall hear St. Gregory's discourse in his own words:

Greg. l. 25. moral. c. 9. “ Every sin that is not quickly purged by penance,
A notable “ either is a sin that is cause of another sin, or is a sin
discourse of “ that is a punishment of another sin. The reason
St. Gregory “ whereof is, that every sin which penance does not
how sins “ wipe away, does by its weight draw us presently to
are multi- “ commit another sin, and thereby comes to pass, that
plied and “ this former sin is not only a sin in it self, but the cause
made more “ also of another sin; and the other subsequent sin so
grievous “ caused by the first, is not only a sin, but the punish-
by delay. “ ment also of the said former sin. For, almighty God
“ by his just judgment does so darken the heart of a
“ sinner, that by the demerit of the former sin, he
“ falls into other sins, adding still sins unto sins. And
“ whereas the former sin is commonly out of malice,
“ because the sinner knows what he does, the second
“ sin oftentimes is out of ignorance in punishment of
“ the former.

“ And whereas in the first sin, which is both a sin
“ and the cause of sin, the sinner sinn'd against his own
“ knowledge and understanding; God permits that in
“ the following sins, which are both sins and punish-
“ ments of sin, the sinner loses the light of his know-
“ ledge and understanding (against which he sinn'd
“ before) so far, that by the demerit of the said former
“ sin, the pit of ensuing sins is cover'd and hidden from
“ his eyes: so that he who sinn'd before wilfully against
“ his own knowledge, as has been said, does by God's
just

“ just judgment fall unwittingly into the said pit of
 “ subsequent sins, his divine majesty for ordaining;
 “ that sins be punish’d by sins; and that the increase
 “ or multiplication of sins be made the very scourge and
 “ chastisement of the sinners?”

Finally, *St. Gregory*, concludes thus: “ These men;
 “ who defer their penance and conversion, have al-
 “ ready sufficient cause for which they deserve to be
 “ damn’d, but yet their sin is suffer’d to grow, to the
 “ end that a more grievous and horrible punishment
 “ may be laid upon them. Their first sin and cause
 “ of sin, deserves damnation; but God expects that
 “ the increase of torments may justly be also inflicted
 “ for their subsequent sins, that are punishments of
 “ the former.” So *St. Gregory*. And let all the de-
 layers and procrastinators attentively consider the
 rigour of this discourse.

But to draw to an end of that which would have no
 end, if I should run through all the ancient fathers
 sayings and writings, on this subject; I will conclude
 with *St. Augustine*, who taking upon him, in one of
 his books, to refute this pernicious error of delaying
 our conversion, has these words: Some are wont to
 say, I am young yet, and will follow my delights for
 a time, and then I will do penance. Which is, as if
 a man should say, I will stab my self with a sword
 now, and after I will go to the physician or surgeon to
 cure me. Alas! poor miserable man! knowest thou
 not, that in an instant a wound is given, which in long
 and painful time is not heal’d, so he that commits any
 sin, as fornication, or the like, with this hope, that
 after he will do penance; why does he not rather fear,
 lest some fever, or other unexpected chance, bring death
 suddenly upon him: and that by this means, his tem-
 poral delay failing him, there succeed in place thereof
 everlasting damnation.

*Aug. l. de
 honest mu-
 lier.*

The same father in another place shewing the danger
 of two extremes in a sinner, the one of despair, the
 other

other of too much hope, from which follows the putting off our conversion; refutes the one and the other, and exalts the mercy and justice of God in them both, saying thus: “Lest men by despair should give themselves to
 “a wicked life, God has laid before us the secure haven
 “of indulgence and pardon, whensoever we repent;
 “and on the other side, lest men should delay their
 “penance, and live wickedly upon hope of this pardon, he has made the day of our death uncertain,
 “preventing hereby most providentially both inconveniencies: so that such as turn to him, may be received;
 “and such as defer their conversion may be terrified.---
 “Wherefore, my brother, do not despair, because
 “mercy is promised thee, but fear also if thou defer
 “thy conversion; because God has not promised that
 “thou shalt live till to-morrow. Some men sin by
 “despairing, others sin by hoping, both of them are
 “perilous, both are dreadful: wo be to them that
 “despair, wo be to them that have a perverse hope,
 “and thereupon defer their penance ---- God has distributed his time, now he calls thee, now he exhorts
 “thee, now he expects thee and thy conversion; but
 “if thou delayest and puts off the present time, and
 “according to the hardness of thy impenitent heart
 “dost hoard to thy self his wrath in the day of vengeance, and of God’s just judgment; then will he
 “pay thee according to thy works, and not otherwise.”
 So St. Augustine.

The two dangerous extremes of despair and too much hope.

Rom. 6.

Ezek. 5.

Heb. 3.

Out of what has been said, we may gather, how important it is, not to neglect the counsel of the wise man exhorting us, in these words: *Slack not to be converted to our Lord, and defer not from day to day, for his wrath shall come suddenly, and in the time of vengeance he will destroy thee.* The same is inculcated to the Hebrews by St. Paul, who citing out of Psalm xciv, these words: *To-day if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts, &c.* Says, *exhort your selves every day whilst to-day is named, that none of you be obdurate*
 with

with the fallacy of sin. Which counsel every one applying to himself, should follow the motions of God's spirit within him, and hearken to his call without delay, considering what a grievous sin it is to resist the Holy Ghost. When therefore you feel an interior motion towards your conversion, think it is God knocks at the door of your hearts and that if you presently open, he will enter and dwell within you. But if you defer until to-morrow, how know you whether he will knock and call again.

Alas! what hope have you of gain from this perilous delay you make? your account is increased, greater satisfaction will be due, your enemy grows stronger, your self weaker, and the difficulties of your conversion are multiplied. What then can keep you back even one day from returning to your duty? is it the desire of enjoying a little longer the vain amusements of this world? alas! tho' they please you for the present, remember the Prophet says, *The day of perdition is at hand, and the times make haste to be present.* *Deut. 32.* Which day being come what can you hope? do you think to cry then that salutary *Peccavi* with the royal Prophet? remember even *Judas* did so, but it avail'd him nothing. Do you intend to redeem your sins by the large alms, you will then order to be distributed? remember that those foolish virgins, who only fill'd their lamps at the instant they were to have enter'd into the marriage feast, were shut out, and disown'd by the bridegroom. Do you think to weep and mourn, and move the Judge with your tears at that instant? consider that *Esau* found no place for repentance tho' he sought it with tears, as *St. Paul* remarks. Do you intend to multiply your vows and make great promises in that distress? call to mind the example of *Antiochus* in his extremity. What promises of good works, what vows of a virtuous life did he not make to God, on condition he escaped: and notwithstanding he prevail'd nothing thereby, the holy Scripture telling us, *This wicked man pray'd to* *2 Mac. 9.*
our

our Lord, of whom he was not to obtain mercy. A terrible example of God's justice offer'd, Christians, to your consideration, not to cast you into despair when you are brought to the last extremity; but to dissuade you from deferring your conversion, assuring

Isaiah 55. you it is not without reason the Prophet said, *Seek ye our Lord whilst he may be found, invoke him whilst he is near.* And St. Paul, *Behold, now is the time acceptable: behold now the day of salvation.* The time in which you feel those interior motions of your heart soliciting to repentance, the time in which you hear that inward voice of God calling to your duty, that present time, is the time in which God is to be found, in which he is near at hand to embrace all them that truly turn unto him, and make a firm resolution of persevering hereafter in a virtuous life. If we defer and make not a right use of this time; we have no warrant that he will call again upon us, no security that he will hereafter receive us. Wherefore I will conclude

Tract. 33. in Joan. with St. *Augustine*, that he is a careless and graceless man, who knowing all this, will notwithstanding venture his salvation on the doubtful event of a final repentance.

C H A P. VIII.

Of three other impediments that hinder men from resolution; to wit slothfulness, careless negligence, and hardness of heart; utterly contemning all motions and calling of almighty God: with the conclusion of the whole Book.

SECT. I. Of Slothfulness.

BESIDES all other impediments and hindrances, which hitherto have been named and recounted, there remain yet divers others, if a man could examine the particular consciences of all such

as do not resolve to return to God. But these three here mention'd, and to be discuss'd in this chapter, are so publick and known, that I cannot pass them over without canvassing them: for many times men are sick and ill affected within; and yet know not their own diseases, the only discovering whereof is, to such as are desirous of their own health, sufficient to divert the danger of the sickness.

First then, the impediment of sloth, is a great and ordinary hindrance of resolution to many men, but especially to idle and delicate people, whose life having been in ease and rest; they persuade themselves, they can take no pains, nor abide any hardships, tho' they would never so fain, if you believe them. These people proceed thus: they will confess as much, and a great deal more than is said before, to be true, and that they would also gladly, for their parts, put the same in execution, but that they cannot. Their bodies cannot bear it, they cannot fast, they cannot pray, they cannot leave their sports, recreations, and merry companions, they should die presently, as they say, with melancholy, if they did it; yet in their hearts they desire that they could do the same; which seeing they cannot, no doubt, say they, but God will accept of their good desire, and pardon them the rest. But let them hearken a little to what the Scripture says hereof: *Desires kill the slothful: for his hands would not work any thing; all the day he longs and desires; but he that is just, will give and will not cease.* And Christ says, *The unprofitable servant cast ye into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* And when he pass'd by the way, and found a fig-tree with leaves without fruit, which signified desires without works, he gave it presently an everlasting curse. Finally, the Prophet David detests those men, and says also, they are detested by almighty God, who are not in the labours of men.

Excuses of
nice and
slothful
people.

Prov. 21.

Mat. 25.

Mat. 21.

Psalms 72.

T t

From

From this fountain of sloth do proceed many effects, that hinder the slothful from good resolutions. And the first is, a certain heaviness, and sleepy drowsiness, towards all goodness, according to what the Scripture says, *Slothfulness brings drowsiness*. For which cause St. Paul says, Arise, thou who art asleep. And Christ cries out so often: Look about you and watch. You will see many men in the world, with whom, if you talk of a cow, or a calf, of a fat ox, of a piece of ground, or the like, they can both hear and talk willingly: but if you reason with them about their salvation, and of their inheritance in the kingdom of heaven; they answer not at all, but will hear, as if they were in a dream. Of these persons says the wise man: *How long wilt thou sleep O sluggard? when wilt thou rise out of thy sleep? Thou shalt sleep a little, a little shalt thou slumber, a little shalt thou join thy hands to sleep: and penury shall come to thee as a way-faring man, and poverty as a man arm'd.*

Fear. The second effect of sloth, is a certain fear of pains and labour, causing doubts where there is none, for as the Scripture says; *Fear casts down the slothful*. And the Prophet says of the like, *They trembled for fear where no fear was*. These men frame to themselves strange imaginations of the service of almighty God, and of very dangerous events, if they should embrace and follow the same. One says, If I should fast much, it would without doubt corrupt my blood. Another says, If I should pray, and stand bare headed long, I should die most certainly of a rheum. A third says, If I should keep account of all my sins, to confess them, it would quickly kill me with sadness. And yet all this is nothing else but sloth, as the Scripture testifies in these words: *The slothful man says a lion, is without, in the midst of the streets, I am to be slain.*

Puſillanimity. A third effect of sloth, is puſillanimity and faintness of heart, whereby the slothful man is overthrown, and discouraged by every contrariety or difficulty which he finds

find in virtue, or which he imagines to find therein. Which the Scripture signifies when it says: *In lapide luteo lapidatus est piger* Eccles. 22. The slothful man is stoned to death, with a stone of dirt: that is, he is overthrown with a difficulty of no importance. Again, *De stercore boum lapidatus est piger*; the slothful man is stoned with the dung of oxen, which commonly is such a substance as can hardly do any hurt.

A fourth effect of sloth, is idle laziness: which we see in many men that will talk and consult of this and that, about their amendment, but will execute nothing. Which is most aptly express'd by the Holy Ghost in these words: *As a door turns on his hinge, so the slothful in his bed.* Laziness. Prov. 13. And again: *The sluggard man will and will not*: that is, he turns himself to and fro in his bed, and between willing and not willing, he does nothing. Prov. 22. And yet further the Scripture describes this laziness, saying: *The slothful hides his hand under the arm hole,* Prov. 26. *and is grieved if he turns it to his mouth.*

All these and many more are the effects of sloth; but these four especially have I thought good to touch in this place, because they greatly hinder this resolution which we talk of. For he that lives in a slumber, and will not hear or attend to any thing that is said of the life to come; and fears to meet with great difficulties in the way; and is thrown down by every little block that he finds; and lastly, is so lazy, that he can bear no labour at all: this man, I say, is past hopes of being brought to any such resolution as we speak of.

To remove therefore this impediment; this sort of men ought to lay before their eyes, the labours of our Saviour Christ and of his Saints; the exhortations they used to other men to take the like pains; the threats made in Scripture against them who labour not; the condition of our present warfare, that requires labour; the crown prepared for it; and the misery ensuing upon idle and lazy people. And finally, if they cannot bear the labour of a virtuous life, which is accompanied

panied with so many consolations that it can not right-fully be call'd a labour, how will they abide the labour and torments of the damn'd, in the life to come, which must be both intolerable and everlasting to them !

The la-
bours of
Saints.

St. Paul says of himself and others, writing to the *Theſſalonians* : That they work'd in labour and weariness, both day and night, thereby to give an example of imitation. Christ in his parable went forth into the streets, several times in one day, and still reprehended grievously those that stood idle, saying : *Why stand you here all the day idle ? I am the true vine, says Christ, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me not bearing fruit he will take it away.* And in another place : speaking of the unprofitable tree, he says, *Cut it down therefore, whereto does it also occupy the ground ?* And again : *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away.* For which cause the wise man also says : *The slothful hand has wrought poverty, the hand of the strong gets riches.* And yet *Prov. 20.* further to the same effect : *Because of cold the slothful would not plough ; therefore he shall beg in the summer, and it shall not be given him.*

The con-
clusion.

All this aims to shew how that this life is a time of labour, and not of idleness, being appointed to us for the gaining of heaven. It is the market, wherein we must buy ; the battle, wherein we must fight and gain our crown ; the winter, wherein we must sow ; the day of labour, wherein we must sweat and gain our penny. And he that passes over lazily this day, as the greatest part of men do, must suffer eternal poverty and need in the long night to come, as more at large has been declared in the first part of this book. Wherefore the wise man (or rather the Holy Ghost by his mouth) gives each one of us a most vehement admonition and exhortation in these words : *Run divers ways, make haste, raise thy friend, give not sleep to thy eyes, neither let thy eye-lids slumber, deliver thy self as a little doe from the hand, and as a bird from the hand of the*

Prov. 6.

the fowler. Go to the emmet, O sluggard, and consider her ways, and learn wisdom: who, whereas she has no guide, nor master, nor captain, prepares meat for herself in the summer, and gathers in the harvest for to eat. By which words we are admonish'd in what order we ought to behave our selves in this life; and how diligent and careful we should be in doing of all good works, considering, that as the emmet labours most earnestly in harvest-time, to lay up for the winter to come: so should we do for the next world; and that slothfulness to this effect, is the greatest and most dangerous impediment that can be. For as the emmet would most certainly die of hunger in the winter, if she lived idly in the summer; so without all doubt, they are to suffer extream need and misery in the world to come, who now out of sloth do omit to labour.

S E C T. II.

Of negligence and carelessness.

THE second impediment is call'd by me, in the title of this chapter, negligence; but I understand thereby more than this word commonly imports. For I comprehend under the name of negligent, all careless and dissolute people, who take nothing to heart that belongs to God or godliness, but only attend to worldly affairs, making their salvation the least part of their thoughts. And under this kind of negligence is contain'd both *Epicurism* (as St. Paul noted in some Christians of his days, who began only to attend to eat and drink, and to make their bellies their God, as many of our Christians now do) and also a secret kind of *Atheism*, or denying God; which is, to deny him, not in words, but in life and behaviour, as St. Paul expounds it. For altho' these men of whom I speak, do in words confess God, and profess themselves to be as good Christians as the rest; yet secretly indeed they

Epicurism.

Rom. 16.

Titus 1.

do not believe there is a God in such manner as they ought, especially with his attributes that are inseparable from him, as namely, his infinite knowledge, providence, care and disposition of human affairs, justice, judgment, and the like. These, I say, do not in effect believe, as their life and behaviour declare. Which secret the holy Scripture discovers plainly, when it says,

Eccles. 2. Wo to them that be dissolute of heart, which believe not God. That is, altho' they protest, that they believe and trust in him; yet by their dissolute and careless behaviour, they testify that in their hearts they believe him not: for they have neither care nor thought of matters appertaining to him.

Of careless
Atheists.
Deut. 28.

This kind of men, are those whom the Scripture notes, and detests for plowing with an ox and an ass together; for sowing their ground with mingled seed; for wearing apparel of lintsy-woolsey, that is made of flax and wool together. These are they of whom Christ says in the revelations: *I would thou wert either cold or hot: but because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth:* These are they, who can accord all religions together, and take up with either side of the question, by only saying: that either they are differences of small importance, or else they appertain only to learned men to think on, and not to them, and that both parts do err in somewhat, or may be agreed, and go both to heaven. These who can apply themselves to any company, to any time, to any prince's pleasure, even in matters of religion, which is their least care. These men forbid all talk of spirit, religion, or devotion in their presence; only they will have men eat, drink, and be merry with them; sing, dance, laugh, and play at cards; and so pass over this life in less consideration of God or godliness, than do the very heathens. And has not holy Writ great reason then, dear brother, to say that these men in their hearts and works are very atheists? yes surely. And it may be proved by many rules

Apoc. 3.

rules set down by our Saviour himself. As for example, *By their fruits ye shall know them*: For *Mat. 7.* such as the tree is within, such is the fruit which that tree sends forth. Again, *Of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks*; and consequently, seeing *Mat. 12.* these mens talk is nothing but worldly vanity; it is an evident sign, there is nothing in their heart but vanity. And then it follows also by a third rule; *Where thy treasure is, there is the heart also*; and *Mat. 6.* so consequently seeing their hearts are only set upon the world and worldly delights, the world is their only treasure, and not God; and therefore they may justly in this sense be term'd atheists, or to use the Apostle's phrase: *Having no hope of the promise, and Ephef. 2.* without a God in this world.

This impediment, dear Christian, reaches both far and wide at this day, and infinite are the people who are entangled therewith; and the causes thereof are two especially. The first is, division, schism, and heresy, in matters of our faith; which, by raising many doubts and questions, and by contentious quarrelling which it maintains, wearies out a man's wit, and in the end brings him to care for no part, but rather to contemn all. The second is, inordinate love of the world, which brings men to hate God, and conceive enmity against him, and therefore no marvel, tho' indeed they neither believe, nor delight in him. And of all other men, these are the hardest to be reclaim'd, and brought to any resolution of amendment, because they are insensible: and besides, they also fly all means, whereby they may be cured. For as there would be but small hope to be conceived of that patient, who being grievously sick, should neither feel his disease, nor believe that he was distemper'd, nor abide to hear of physick or physicians, nor accept of any counsel that should be offer'd, nor admit any talk or consultation about his curing: so these men are in a more dangerous state than any other, because they know not their own dan-

Two causes
of Atheism
at this day.

A compa-
rison.

ger, but persuading themselves to be wiser than their neighbours, they remove from their thoughts all things whereby their health might be procured.

The way
to cure
careless
men.

Deut. 6.
Mat. 22.
Luke 30.

The only way to do these men good, if there be any way at all, is to make them know that they are sick, and in great danger; which in our case may be done best, as it seems to me, by giving them to understand how far they are off from true christianity, and consequently from all hope of salvation that may be had thereby. God requires at our hands that we should love him and serve him, with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength. These are the precise words of almighty God, set down both in the old and new law. And how far are these careless men short of this, who employ not the half of their heart, nor the half of their soul, nor the half of their strength, nay, nor the least part thereof, in God's service. God requires at our hands, that we should make his laws and precepts our study; that we should think of them continually, and meditate upon them both day and night, at home and abroad, early and late, when we go to bed, and when we rise in the morning, this is the commandment, and there is no dispensation from it. But how far from this, are these men who bestow not the third part of their thoughts upon this matter, no not the hundredth part, nor scarce once a-year think thereof? Can these men say, they are Christians, or that indeed they believe in *Jesus* our Saviour?

An Anthi-
thesis be-
tween true
Christians
and careless
worldlings.

1 John 2.

Christ making the estimate of things in this life, pronounced this sentence: *Unum est necessarium*; one onely thing is necessary, or of necessity in this world, meaning thereby, the diligent and careful service of God. These men find many things necessary besides this one thing, and this not necessary at all. How far do they differ then in judgment from their Saviour Christ? Christ's Apostle says, That a Christian must neither love the world, nor any thing in the world. These men love nothing else, but that which is of the world,

world. It is said again : *Whosoever therefore will be a friend of this world, is made an enemy of God.* These men are enemies to whosoever is not a friend to the world. How then can they be friends of God? Christ says : *That it behoves always to pray.* These men never pray. Christ's Apostle says : *That covetousness, uncleanness, or scurrility, should not be so much as named among Christians.* These men have no other talk.

Luke 18.

Ephes. 5.

Finally, the whole course and canon of Scripture runs, that Christians should be attentive, vigilant, careful, fervent, and perseverant without intermission, in the service of their God. But these men have not one of these points, or any one degree thereof, but in every one the contrary. For they are neither attentive to those things which appertain to God, not solicitous, nor careful; and much less instant and fervent, and least of all, perseverant without intermission, because they never begin. But on the contrary, they are careless, negligent, lumpish, remiss, perverse, contemning, and despising, yea loathing and abhorring all matters that appertain to the mortifying of themselves, and to the true service of God. What part have these men then in the lot and portion of Christians, besides only the bare name, which profits nothing?

And this is sufficient to shew, how great and dangerous an impediment this careless, senseless, and supine negligence is to the resolution whereof we treat, for if Christ requires, that whosoever once spies out the treasure hidden in the field (which is the kingdom of heaven, and the right way to gain it) should presently go and sell all that he has, and buy the field: that is to say, that he should prefer the pursuit of this kingdom of heaven, before all the commodities of this life whatsoever; and rather venture them, than to omit gaining this treasure: if Christ, I say, requires this, as he does; when will these men ever be brought to this point, who will not give the least part of their goods to purchase that field, nor go forth of their doors to treat

The danger of a careless man.

about

about the buying thereof, nor will so much as think or talk of the same, nor harken to him who offers the means and ways to compass it?

The conclusion.

Wherefore, whosoever finds himself in this perilous disease, I would counsel him to read some chapters of of the first part of this book; especially the second, fourth, and fifth, treating of the causes for which we were sent into this world; as also of the account which we must yield to God, of the time we have spent here; and he will there understand, I doubt not, the error and danger he stands in, by this damnable negligence wherein he sleeps; attending only to those things which are meer vanities, and for which he came not into this world; and passing over other matters, without care or concern, which notwithstanding are the only matters of importance, and most necessary for all men to employ their whole care and study in.

S E C T. III.

Of hardness of heart, and how dangerous it is.

THE third and last impediment that I purpose to handle in this book, is a certain affection, or evil disposition in some men, call'd by the Scriptures, *Hardness of heart*, or in other words, obstinacy of mind, whereby a man is settled in resolution, never to turn from the state of sin wherein he lives, whatsoever can or may be said against the same. And I have reserved this impediment for the last place in this book, because it is the last and worst of all other impediments discover'd before, containing all the evil in it self that any of the other before rehearsed have; and adding to the same, besides, a wilful and malicious resolution of sin, quite contrary to that resolution, which we so much endeavour to induce men unto.

Two degrees of hardness of heart.

This hardness of heart has divers degrees in divers men, and in some much more grievous and perilous than in others. For some are arrived to that high obduration,

duration, which I named before, in such sort, that altho' they know they are in the wrong, yet for some worldly respect or other, they will not yield, nor change their course, say or prove whatsoever you will or can. Such was the obduration of *Pilate*, who altho' *Mat. 27.* he knew well that he condemn'd our Saviour Christ wrongfully; yet not to lose the favour of the *Jews* or incur displeasure with his prince, he proceeded and gave that most wicked Sentence against him. This also was the obduration of *Pharaoh*, who tho' he saw the miracles of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and felt the strong hand of God upon his kingdom; yet not to seem to be overcome by such simple people as they were, nor that men should think he would be forced by any means to relent; he persever'd still in his wilful wickedness, till his last and utter destruction came upon him. This hardness of heart was also in king *Agrippa*, and in *Felix*, governor of *Jewry*; who tho' in their own consciences they thought that *St. Paul* spoke truth to them, yet not to hazard their credit in the world, they continued still and perish'd in their own vanities. And commonly *Persecu-* this obduration is in all persecutors of virtue and virtu- *tors.* ous men, whom altho' they see evidently to be innocent, and to have equity on their side; yet to maintain their credit, and favour in the world, persist, without either mercy or release, till God cut them off in the midst of their malice and cruel designs.

Others there are who have not this obduration in so high a degree, as to persist in wickedness directly against their own knowledge, but yet they have it in another sort: for they are settled in a firm purpose to follow the method which they have already begun, and will not understand the dangers thereof, but seek rather means to persuade themselves, and quiet their consciences therein, and nothing is so offensive to them, as to hear things against the same. Of these men holy *Job* *Job 21.* says, *Who say to God, depart from us, we will not the knowledge of thy ways.* And the Prophet *David* yet more

A second
degree of
obduration

Pſalm 57. more expreſſly : *They have fury according to the ſimilitude of a ſerpent : as of the aſp that is deaf and ſtops his ear : which will not hear the voice of the inchanter.* By this inchanter, he means the Holy Ghoſt, who ſeeks to charm them and draw them from the pleaſures, call'd by the wiſe man, *fascinatiō nugacitatis* ; the bewitching of vanity. But, as the Prophet ſays, *They would not attend, and they turn'd away the ſhoulder departing : and they aggravated their ears not to hear. And they made their heart as the adamant, leſt they ſhould hear the law.*

The hard
hearted
Jews.
Acts 7.

The nation of *Jews* is peculiarly noted to have been always given to this great ſin, as *St. Stephen* witneſſes, when he ſaid to their own faces, *You ſtiff neck'd ---- you always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt : as your fathers, you alſo :* meaning thereby, as *Chriſt* declares more at large, that they reſiſted the Prophets and Saints of God, by whom the Holy Ghoſt ſpoke to them from time to time, for the amendment of their lives. And becauſe through the light of knowledge which they had by hearing of God's law, they could not in truth, or with ſhew of reaſon, condemn the things which were ſaid, or avoid the juſt reprehensions uſed towards them ; yet they reſolved not to obey, or change their proceedings : therefore they fell in ſine to perſecute ſharply their reproachers, whereof the only cauſe was hardneſs of heart. God ſays by the mouth of *Jeremiah*, *They have hardened their faces more than the rock, and they would not return.* And in another place of the ſame Prophet, he complains grievouſly of this perverſeneſs : *Why then is this people in Jeruſalem turn'd away with a contentious revolting, &c.* And yet again in another place : *Why will ye die, you houſe of Iſrael ? Why will you damn your ſelves ? why are you ſo obſtinate as not to hear ? ſo perverſe, as not to learn ? ſo cruel to your ſelves, that you will not know the danger wherein you live, nor underſtand the miſery that hangs over you ?*

Doſt

Dost thou not imagine, dear brother, that God uses this kind of speech, not only to the *Jews*, but also to many thousand Christians, and, perhaps, also to thy self many times every day, because thou refusest his good motions, and other means sent from him, to draw thee to his service, being resolved not to yield thereunto, but to follow thy pleasures, notwithstanding whatsoever persuasions to the contrary? Alas, how many Christians are there, who say to God daily (as those whom I have named before did) *Depart from us, we will not the knowledge of thy ways.* How many are there, that abhor to hear good books, fly and detest the frequentation of good company, lest perhaps, by such occasions they might be touch'd and so be converted and saved? How many are there who say with those most unfortunate hard-hearted-men, whereof the Prophet speaks: *We have struck a league with death, and with hell we have made a covenant.* Which is in effect as much, as if they said, trouble us not, molest us not with thy persuasions, spend not thy words and labour in vain, talk to others who are not yet settled, let them take heaven that will, we for our parts are resolved, we have made a league that must be kept, we have made a bargain that must be perform'd, yea tho' it be with hell, and everlasting death.

The obduration of a hard heart is a wonderful fury, and not without cause compared by the Prophet as I have shew'd before, to the wilful fury and rage of serpents. And in another place, the holy Scripture describes it thus, *Thou art stubborn, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy forehead of brass.* What can be more vehemently spoken to express the hardness of their heart? But yet St. Bernard expresses it more at large in these words. "And what is then a hard heart: A hard heart is that, which is neither rent by compunction, nor softned by devotion, nor moved with prayers, nor yields to threatening, nor is any thing help'd, but rather harden'd by chastising. A hard

God cries.
unto us
daily.

Job. 21.

Isa. 28.

The descrip-
tion of a
hard heart.

Isa. 41.

*Lib. 1. de
confid. ad
Eugen. c. 2*

“ hard heart is that, which is ungrateful to God’s
 “ benefits, disobedient to his counsels, made cruel by
 “ his judgments, dissolute by his allurements, without
 “ shame of filthiness, fearless of perils, arrogant in
 “ human affairs. Careless in matters appertaining to
 “ God, forgetful of things past, negligent in things
 “ present, improvident for things to come.”

The expli-
 cation of
 St. Ber-
 nard’s
 words.

By the description of St. *Bernard*, it appears, that a hard heart is almost a desperate disease, where ever it falls. For what will you do, says this father, to amend it? if you lay the grievousness of his sins before him, he is not touch’d with compunction. If you allege him all the reasons in the world, why we ought to serve God, and why we ought not to offend and dishonour him; he is not mollified by this consideration of piety. If you would intreat and beseech him with tears, even on your knees; he is not moved. If you threaten God’s wrath against him, he yields nothing thereunto. If God scourge him indeed; he is furious, and becomes much harder than before. If God bestows benefits on him; he is ungrateful. If he counsels him for his salvation; he obeys not. If you tell him of God’s secret and severe judgments; it drives him to despair. If you assure him of God’s mercy, it makes him dissolute. If you tell him of his own filthiness, he blushes not. If you admonish him of his perils; he fears not. If he deals in worldly matters; he is proud and arrogant. If he deals in matters appertaining to God; he is rash, light, and contemptuous. Finally, he forgets whatsoever has pass’d before him, in regard to other men, concerning the reward of the good, or the punishment of sinners. For the time present, he neglects it, and makes no account of using it to his benefit. And as for things to come, for bliss or misery, he is utterly unprovident; nor will esteem them, lay them never so often, or vehemently before his face. And what way is there then to do this man good?

Not without great cause surely, did the wise man pray so heartily to God : *Give me not over to a shameless and foolish mind* : that is, unto a hard and obstinate heart. Whereof he gives the reason in another place of the same book : *A hard heart shall fare ill in the latter end, and he that loves danger shall perish in it.* Oh that all hard hearted people would note this reason of the Scripture ! But St. *Bernard* goes on, and opens the terror hereof more fully, when he says : “ There was “ never yet hard hearted man saved except perchance “ God, by his mercy, did take away his stony heart, “ and give him a heart of flesh, according to the Pro- “ phet.” By which words, St. *Bernard* signifies and proves out of the Prophet, that there are two kinds of hearts in men ; the one a fleshy heart, which bleeds if you but prick it ; that is, it falls to contrition, repentance and tears, upon never so small a check for sin. The other is a stony heart, which if you beat never so much with hammers, you may as soon break it in pieces, as either bend it, or make it bleed. And of these two hearts in this life, depends all our misery or felicity for the life to come. For as God, when he would take vengeance of *Pharaoh*, had no more grievous way to do it, than to say, I will harden the heart of *Pharaoh* : that is, as St. *Augustine* expounds it, I will take away my grace, and so permit him to harden his own heart : so when he would shew mercy to *Israel*, he had no more forcible a means to express it, than to say, *I will take away the stony heart, and will give you a fleshy heart.* Which is to say, I will take away your hard heart ; and give you a soft heart, that will be moved when it is spoken to. And of all other blessings and benefits which God bestows upon mortal man in this life, this soft and tender heart is one of the greatest ; I mean, such a heart as is soon check’d and controul’d, soon pierced, soon made to bleed, soon stirr’d to amendment. And on the contrary, there can be no greater curse, or malediction laid upon a Christian, than to have

The danger of a hard heart.
Eccles. 23.

Lib. 1. de confid. c. 2.
Ezek. 36.

Two kinds of hearts in men, with their properties.

Exod. 4.
Aug. 18.
super.
Exod. 8.
Ser. 88. de Tem.
Ezek. 36.

have a hard and obstinate heart, which heaps every day vengeance to it self, as *St. Paul* says; and is compared by the same Apostle, to the ground which no store of rain can make fruitful, altho' it fall never so often upon it: and therefore he pronounces thereof, *That it is reprobate, and very near a curse; whose end is to be burnt.*

The conclusion.

Which thing being so, no wonder, the holy Scripture does so carefully dissuade us from this obduration and hardness of heart, as from the most dangerous and desperate disease that can possibly fall upon a Christian, being indeed, as *St. Paul* signifies, the next door to reprobation it self. The same Apostle therefore cries out, Do not contristate or make sad, do not extinguish the spirit of God, by obduration, by resisting and impugning the same? and again: Let no man among you be hard hearted through the deceit of sin.

Heb. 6. The Prophet *David* also cries: Even this day, if you hear the voice of God calling you to repentance, see you harden not your hearts against him. All which earnest speeches used by God's holy spirit, give you to understand, how carefully we ought to fly this most pestilent infection of a hard heart; which almighty God, of his mercy, give us grace to do, and endue us with a tender heart, that we may fully obey his divine majesty.

3 Reg. 3. Such a soft heart, I say, as the wise man desires, when he said to God: *Give to thy servant a docile heart.* Such a heart as God himself describes to be in all them whom he loves, saying: *To whom shall I have respect, but to the poor little one, and the contrite of spirit, and him that trembles at my words.*

What heart God requires in us.

Behold, dear brother, what a heart God requires at thy hands? a poor, and humble heart, also a contrite heart, for thy offences past; and a heart that trembles at every word that comes to thee from God by his ministers. How then wilt thou not tremble at so many words, and whole discourses as have been used before to awake thee, to denounce thy peril, to stir thee to amendment?

ment? how wilt thou not fear the threats and judgments of this great Lord? how wilt thou dare to proceed any further in his displeasure? how wilt thou defer this resolution any longer? surely the least part of that which has been said, might suffice to move a tender heart, an humble and contrite spirit, to make a present resolution for the amendment of life. But if all together cannot move thee to do it: I can say no more, but that thou hast a very hard heart indeed, which I beseech our heavenly Father to soften, for thy salvation, with the precious blood of his only Son our Saviour, who was content to shed it for that effect upon the Cross,

S E C T. IV.

Containing the conclusion of the whole Book, with an exhortation.

HAVING now said as much as time permitted me, concerning the first general point required of us for our salvation; that is, concerning resolution, which was appointed by my division in the beginning, to be the subject and matter of this first book: I will here make an end, deferring for a time the performance of my purpose, for the other two books, upon the causes and reasons set down in the beginning, not doubting, but if almighty God will vouchsafe to work in any man's heart, by means of this book, or otherwise, this first point of resolution, the most hard of all others, he will also give means to perfect the same work, begun by himself, and will supply by other ways, the two points following: that is to say, both a right beginning, and a constant perseverance, whereunto the other two books I promised, are appointed. Neither would it be hard, for any man that was once truly resolved, to find helpers and instructors enough (besides the Holy Ghost, who in this case will always be ready with his divine assistance) to forward him in this holy enter-

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prise,

Phil. 2.

prise, altho' these two other books of mine, should never come forth. There want not at this day, our merciful Lord be glorified for it, either store of good books, nor skilful men in our own country, that are well able to guide a zealous spirit, in the right way to virtue. And yet, as I have promised before, so I mean, by God's holy help and assistance, to send thee, Christian reader, the other two books also: especially, if it pleases his divine majesty to encourage me thereunto, with the gain or good of any one soul, by this which is already done: that is to say, if I shall understand, conceive, or hope that any one soul purchased by the precious blood of the Son of God, has been moved to resolution, by any thing that is here said, or has been reclaim'd from the bondage of sin, and restored to the service of our Maker and Redeemer, which is the only end of my writing, as his divine majesty knows best.

And truly, dear Christian, altho', I confess, that much more might be said for this point of *Resolution*, than is here touch'd by me, or than any man can well utter in any competent kind of book or volume: yet I am of opinion that either these reasons here alleged are sufficient, or else nothing will suffice for the conquering of our obstinacy, and beating down our rebellious disobedience in this point. Here thou mayst see and read the principal arguments, inducing thee to the service of God, and detestation of vice. Here thou mayst behold (especially, in this edition, which is much larger than some of the former) first, that of necessity thou must confess there is a God that made thee, and all other things; the end and cause why he created thee, which is to serve him, by fulfilling Christ's holy commandments; what things are required at thy hands in particular; the account that will be demanded of thee; the justice and severity of God therein, his goodness towards thee, watchfulness over thee, his desire to win thee, his reward if thou dost well, his infinite punishments if thou dost evil; his calls, his promises, his
allurements

The effect
of that
which has
been said in
this book.

In the first
part.

allurements to save thee. And on the contrary, here are discover'd to thee, the vanities, and deceit of those impediments, hindrances or excuses, which any way might stop or discourage thy resolution; the feign'd hardships of a virtuous life are removed; the imaginary difficulties in God's service are taken away; the alluring flatteries of worldly vanities are laid open; the foolish presumption upon God's mercy, the danger of delay, the dissimulation of sloth, the desperate perils of careless and stony hearts are laid open. What then wilt thou desire more to move thee? what other arguments wilt thou expect to draw thee from vice and wickedness?

In the second part.

If all this stir thee not, what will move thee? if when thou hast read this, thou lay'st down the book again, and walk on in thy careless life, as quietly as before; what hope, I beseech thee, can there be conceived of thy salvation? Wilt thou go to heaven living as thou dost? it is impossible. Thou may'st as soon drive God out of heaven, as get thither thy self, by this kind of life. What then? wilt thou forego heaven, and think to escape hell also? this is less possible, whatsoever the atheists of this world do persuade thee. Wilt thou perhaps defer the matter, and think of it hereafter? I have told thee my opinion concerning the danger of this delay. Thou wilt never have more ability to do it than now, and perhaps never half so much. If thou refusest it now, I greatly fear, that thou wilt be refused hereafter thy self. There is no way then so good, dear brother, as to do it presently whilst it is offer'd. Break from that tyrant, which detains thee in servitude; shake off his chains, cut in sunder his bands, run violently to *CHRIST*, who stands ready to embrace thee with his arms open on the Cross. Make all the Angels, and court of heaven joyful with thy conversion; take a manly resolution; say with that old courageous soldier of *JESUS CHRIST* *St. Hierom*: "If my father stood weeping on his knees before me, and my mother hanging on my neck behind me; and all my brethren,

Luke 15.

A notable saying of *St. Hierom.*
Ad Henodorus.

“ brethren, sisters, children, and kinsfolks howling
 “ on every side to detain me in a sinful life with them:
 “ I would fling off my mother to the ground, despise
 “ all my kindred, run over my father, and tread him
 “ under my feet, thereby to run to *CHRIST* when
 “ he calls me. And this is the greatest kind of piety
 “ above all others in this point, to shew ourselves cruel.”

An exhortation.

Oh that we had such hearts, dear Christian, as this servant of God had, such courage, such resolution, such fervent love of our master. Who would lie one day drown'd in sin. Who would live one day in such slavery as we do? Who would eat husk with the prodigal son among swine, seeing he may return home, and be so honourably received, and entertain'd by his own father, have so good cheer and banqueting, and hear so great melody, joy, and triumph for his return? I say no more concerning this, dear brother, than thou art assured of, by the word and promises of God's own mouth, from which neither falsehood nor deceit can proceed. Return then, I beseech thee, lay hold of his promise, who will not fail thee; run to him now he calls, whilst thou hast time, and esteem not all this world worth a straw, in respect of this one act. For so shalt thou be a most happy, and thrice happy man, and shalt bless hereafter the hour and moment that ever thou madest this fortunate resolution. And for my part, I confide, I shall not be void of some share of thy good and felicity. At least I doubt not, but thy holy conversion will obtain for me from our common Father, who is the God of mercies, remission of my many sins, and that I may serve and honour him, together with thee, all the days of my life; which ought to be the petition of us both. And therefore in both our names I beseech his divine majesty to grant it unto us, for his dear Son our Lord and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST's* sake. *Amen.*

Luke 15.

The End of the Second Part of this First Book; treating of Resolution.

